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Mid-1980 South African Incursions into Angola - UN security Council Resolution - Earlier Angolan-South African Clashes

It was announced on Aug. 19 by the official news agency Angop that a 206-member National People's Assembly would be installed in November 1980 to replace the existing Council of the Revolution as the supreme organ of state (as provided for in the Constitution promulgated at the time of independence in 1975), and that provincial people's assemblies would also be elected. Voting for electoral colleges which would choose the members of the National Assembly and the provincial assemblies accordingly began on Aug. 23 in the southern province of Cunene, most candidates being members of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola-Party of Labour (MPLAPT)-the country's sole legal political party.

A national commission to study the implementation of people's power had held its first session on Feb. 16, 1980.

Government Reorganization - Economic Difficulties

A number of ministerial changes were announced on July 8 and 12 including the appointment of a new Defence Minister to replace Cdr. Iko Teles Carreira, who was relieved of his post on Feb. 10, 1980, and whose functions had since then been controlled ad interim by President dos Santos and the Army Chief of Staff [see 30274 B] . In changes to the structure of the Council of Ministers (i) a Ministry of State security was created, (ii) the Industry and Energy Ministry was divided into two and (iii) the Ministry of Housing and Construction was divided into a ministry and a secretariat. The membership of the Council of Ministers incorporating the latest changes was as follows:

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|--|----------------------------|
| Lt.-Col. Manuel Alexandre Eduardo Rodrigues Quito | Interior |
| Mr Kundi Paihama | State security |
| Col. Pedro Maria Tonha Pedale | Defence |
| Mr Paulo Teixeira Jorge | Foreign Affairs |
| Mr Roberto Antonio Victor Francisco Almeida | Planning |
| Mr Carlos Alberto van Dunen | Internal Trade |
| Mr Lopo Fortunato Ferreira do Nascimento | External Trade |
| Dr Diogenes Assis Boavida | Justice |
| Cdr. Pedro de Castro dos Santos van Dunen Loi | Energy |
| Maj. José Alberto do Carmo Bento Ribeiro | Industry |
| Maj. Domingos Evaristo Quimba | Provincial Co-ordination |
| Mr Agostinho André Mendes de Carvalho | Health |
| Mr Horacio Pereira Braz da Silva | Labour and Social security |

Mr Manuel Alves dos Passos

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Barroso Mangureira | Construction |
| Mr Emilio José Guerra de Carvalho | Fisheries |
| Mr Manuel Pedro Pacavira | Agriculture |
| Mr Fernando Fausto Muteka | Transport and Communications |
| Mr Ambrosio Lucoque | Education |
| Mr Ismael Gáspár Martins | Finance |
| Mr Jorge Morais | Petroleum |

*New appointment.

+Changed portfolio.

Lt.-Col. Rodrigues Quito was hitherto Deputy Minister of Internal Order[see page 30028 B]; **Mr Paihama** Interior Minister, **Col. Tonha Pedale** Deputy Defence Minister, Cdr. Van **Dunen Loi** Minister of Provincial Co-ordination, **Maj. Evaristo Quimba** provincial governor of Cuanza Norte, **Mr Braz da Silva** Minister of Rousing and Construction and **Mr Barroso Mangureira** Deputy Minister of Housing and Construction.

The deputy ministers, among whom further appointment were announced in mid-September, Mr João Fernandes* (Health), Mr Mariano García Puku (Interior), Mr Joaquim da Silva Matias* (Basic Education), Mr Sebastiao de Sousa * (Finance), Mr Augusto Teixeira de Matos* (Budget), Mr Florencio Gamaleal Gáspár Martins (Internal Trade), Mr Paulino Pinto João (External Trade), Mr Julio de Almeida (Transport), Mr Celestino Tavares Ribeiro* (Communications), Mr Geramo Gomes (Agriculture), Mr Graciano Manguere * (Forestry), Mr Luis Fonseca * (Construction). (* New appointment.)

Mr Lourenço José Ferreira Diandengue (previously Deputy Minister of State security) was appointed Secretary of State for Housing, the other secretaries of state in the Council being Mr Antonio Jacinto do Amaral Martins (Culture), Mr Rui Alberto Vieira Dias Mingas (Physical Education and Sport), Mrs Maria da Assuncao Vahekenny (Social Affairs).

The following new provincial governors (commissars) were also appointed: Mr Francisco Gomes de Oliveira e Silva (Luanda), Mr Jacinto Pascual Fortunato (Bengo-a new province created in June 1980 by dividing Luanda province, Caxito being designated its capital), Mr Noe [Nogueiraj]da Silva saude (Cuanza Norte), Col. Ludi Kissasunda (Malanje). (Mr Silva Saude was previously Minister of Labour and Social security.)

The government changes took place at a time of economic crisis when the country's security also continued to be threatened by South African incursions in the south as well as operations carried out by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the pro-Western guerrilla movement led by Dr Jonas Savimbi and allegedly supported by South Africa [see below].

At an extraordinary session of the central committee of the MPLA-PT in Luanda on May 28–30, 1980, it had been concluded that the economic crisis was due fundamentally to a drop in production, factors of a “structural and organizational nature”, the “capitalist general crisis” and “continued South African acts of aggression”, as well as “the poor performance of some sectors of the state apparatus”. It was decided inter alia to “revise the structures of government”, to give priority support to rural areas, to study ways of encouraging private initiatives in the economic field, to take urgent measures to “normalize supplies to the

people and to economic and social sectors”, and also to recommend the “reactivation of production farms” for the rehabilitation of those sabotaging or destroying state property or hindering the production process. An extraordinary congress of the MPLA-PT was due to take place in December 1980 to approve economic plans for 1981–85.

South African military forces entered Angola on June 7 across the Namibian border and over the following three weeks carried out the largest-scale operations to date in Angola's southern border provinces of Cunene and Cuando-Cubango. Angola protested to the UN security Council at the incursions and claimed that 2,000–3,000 South African troops had been involved and that some 400 Angolan civilians and dozens of soldiers had been killed. South Africa claimed to have killed more than 360 SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) guerrillas and to have lost 17 men, a high figure compared with previous incidents. The incursions took place against a background of UN efforts to bring about a ceasefire in the Namibia conflict and to establish a demilitarized zone along both sides of the Namibian-Angolan border [see page 29914], although no agreement had yet been reached with the main parties in the conflict, South Africa and SWAPO. Moreover, UNITA threatened to take “appropriate action” if any UN force interfered in “UNITA territory” and also demanded to be represented at talks. [UNITA's force were thought to be concentrated in central Angola and in the extreme south with some zones of influence also in the north and other areas.] The entry of South African troops into Cunene province (on June 7) was officially disclosed to the South African Parliament on June 13 by the Prime Minister, Mr P. W. Botha, who said that SWAPO's operational headquarters had been destroyed in a “shock attack” during which Angolan troops had avoided contact with the South Africans.

On the same day the Angolan Defence Ministry claimed that three out of six South African Mirage fighter-bombers which attacked a refugee camp the previous week at Lubango (formerly Sa de Bandeira), some 300 miles north of the border, had been shot down; it was subsequently disclosed from Luanda on June 18 that in the confusion an Angolan civilian aircraft had also been shot down by Angolan guns, all those on board being killed.

A South African military spokesman said on June 14 that “the final phase of withdrawal, and the operation, can be considered completed”. However, a communiqué from the Angolan Defence Ministry on June 27 claimed that a South African force had remained inside Angola since June 7; that between June 7 and 23 this force, numbering about 2,000 and supported by three Mirage squadrons, had carried out a number of actions in Cunene province, notably the occupation of Mulemba (west of Ngiva and some 20 miles north of the border) on June 8 by two parachute companies and of Chifufua on June 10; and that 300 civilians and seven Angolan soldiers had been killed and 250 people wounded when South Africans “attacked the population, killing indiscriminately old people, women and children and shooting cattle”. The communiqué claimed that one of the aims of the invasion was to install UNITA in the area demarcated for the proposed demilitarized zone.

Furthermore, the Angolan authorities subsequently claimed that on June 24 another South African infantry brigade had entered Angola, supported by a tank regiment and two long-range artillery units, and that the invasion had at this stage spread eastwards to the neighbouring province of Cuando-Cubango. Luanda claimed that the village of Katomba was attacked on June 25, causing many casualties, and that M'Pupa village (some 40 miles from the border) was also raided by helicopters on June 27.

Mr Eliseo de Figueiredo, the Angolan permanent representative at the United Nations, called on June 26 for an urgent meeting of the security Council and told the press on the next day that there was fierce fighting in the two southern provinces; he also alleged that more than 15 battalions of South African troops (i.e. of 750 men each) were massing at Grootfontein, some 150 miles south of the Namibian border. Mr Figueiredo said that if Angolan forces were unable to repulse South African troops Angola would call for outside help. (However, Mr Lucio Lara, a member of the MPLA-PT political bureau, said at the end of June that as long as fighting was restricted to the border provinces Cuban troops would not be brought into the fighting so as not to internationalize the conflict.)

In a letter to the security Council on June 27 Mr R. F. (Pik) Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, denied Angola's charges of large-scale troop activities as “ludicrous” and stated that only a small combat force with air support was in southern Angola, fighting SWAPO, and that this was now withdrawing. South Africa had, he said, at no time acted against Angolan troops except on June 23 when, during anti-SWAPO activities, a helicopter was shot down and the pilot, in fighting his way out, killed several Angolan soldiers who had already shot dead the flight engineer.

Later on June 27 the security Council passed a resolution by 12 votes to none with three abstentions (Britain, France and the USA) condemning South Africa's “persistent armed invasions” of Angola and

demanding the immediate withdrawal of all its forces and the payment of compensation. The resolution also condemned South Africa for using Namibia as a “springboard for armed invasions and destabilization” against Angola and added that, in the event of further violations of Angolan sovereignty by South Africa, the security Council would consider more effective measures including the imposition of sanctions.

At the end of June further Angolan Government statements and military sources said that, notwithstanding the security Council's resolution (and a South African assurance to the security Council on June 30 that all its forces had been pulled back), eight battalions of troops entering south of Savate and at two points east and west of Ngiva (the provincial capital) were occupying “vast areas” of Cunene and had installed a command post at Mulemba and occupied Mongua (60 miles west of Mulemba) and Evale; according to these accounts, between June 24 and 29 South African and Angolan troops had clashed violently in Mongua, leaving 19 Angolans dead and 23 wounded, while two South African helicopters had been shot down.

At a press conference on the border on July 2 Maj.-Gen. Jan Geldenhuys, then commander of South African forces in Namibia, said that a major blow had been dealt to SWAPO's army during the raids of the past three weeks and that a new SWAPO military campaign had been forestalled. At least 360 guerrillas had been killed (as well as 17 South Africans) and 300 tonnes of equipment seized, leaving the organization weakened and with its overall numbers estimated at less than 8,000; however, care had been taken, he said, to avoid contact with Angolan civilians and also with troops, with whom there had been only two clashes.

After the completion of the main South African operation border incidents involving SWAPO and South Africans persisted.

A South African spokesman said on July 28 that the previous day South African troops had pursued SWAPO guerrillas into Angola after the latter had shelled the town of Ruacana, just south of the border. In another operation, which South Africa said on July 31 was aimed at stopping SWAPO from infiltrating Kaokoland (north-west Namibia) by a new route from Lubango passing through Chitado, situated a few miles north of the border, the latter town was raided on July 30 by a small helicopter-borne force of South Africans, 27 guerrillas and Angolan soldiers being killed.

In mid-August (i.e. the week before the elections in Cunene province above) the Angolan Defence Ministry disclosed that South Africa had made repeated attacks on Ngiva and that air reconnaissance flights had increased over the past few days, covering towns more than 200 miles from the Namibian border. Another Defence Ministry communiqué of Sept. 3 said that at least 31 Angolans had been killed in these operations, including 15 in an attack on Xiede by two Mirages on Aug. 26.

The Angolan news agency Angop reported on July 31 that during the period January to June 1980 South Africa had carried out 529 violations of Angolan territory. Unofficial estimates in the press said that over this period 432 guerrillas and 59 South Africans had been killed.

Earlier incidents involving South African troops in southern Angola between late 1979 and May 1980 are detailed below. (For incidents prior to September 1979 see 29913 A and page 297760)

Mr Luis d'Almeida, the Angola ambassador to Belgium, said in early November 1979 that South Africa had begun air raids into Angola on Sept. 11, 1979, the day after President Neto's death, and had bombed economic targets in an effort to take advantage of the political vacuum, weaken Angola's reconstruction process and frighten away potential investors. Angola claimed at the end of September that 60 people had been killed and 126 wounded in raids on towns in Cunene and Huila provinces on Sept. 27.

Angola on Oct. 31, 1979, requested an urgent meeting of the security Council and accused South Africa of launching a two-pronged attack deep into Angola using helicopter-borne troops, blowing up a railway tunnel and four bridges on the Lubango-Mocamedes road, and landing troops in Porto Alexandre and Virei; Angolan radio claimed that 18 civilians and two soldiers had lost their lives. Accordingly, the security Council met on Nov. 2 and adopted by 12 votes to none with three abstentions (Britain, France and the USA) a resolution calling on South Africa to respect Angolan sovereignty and for urgent assistance to be given to Angola and the other southern African front-line states to strengthen their defence capacity.

A South African Army spokesman said on Nov. 29 that his troops had in the past week killed 68 guerrillas and destroyed SWAPO camps during hot-pursuit raids across Namibia's northern border; seven guerrillas and one South African had been killed on the Namibian side of the border.

During a border clash followed by a hot-pursuit operation on Feb. 7, 1980, a total of 19 guerrillas and six South Africans were killed, and at the end of the month Angola accused South Africa of killing eight people in air raids and of massing troops on the border.

Acting on a request from Angola the security Council again convened on March 28, when it passed a resolution by 12 votes to none with three abstentions (Britain, France and the USA) condemning South Africa for its “premeditated, persistent and sustained invasions” of Angola and calling for an immediate end to such “provocative” acts. The preamble to the resolution expressed the conviction that the intensity and timing of the raids were aimed at frustrating a negotiated settlement of the Namibia conflict.

The Angolan Chief of Staff said at the end of May that an escalation of South African activities against Angola had begun earlier in the month, although officials in Cunene province had been reporting intense air raids since the beginning of 1980 as well as the shelling of major roads. He said that raids carried out on May 21 against small towns about 50 miles inside the Angolan border had left more than 200 people dead and many injured, and that many hostages had been taken.

Meanwhile UNITA's leader, Dr Savimbi, stated on Feb. 1 that 20,000 Angolans spearheaded by a force of 5,000 Cubans had been attacking his forces since early January on four fronts, in the central provinces of Benguela, Huambo, Bie and Moxico, in order to gain control of these areas and to prevent further sabotage of the Benguela railway and allow it to reopen. [For the subsequent report reported reopening of the railway in July 1980, see 30561 A.]

The Governor of Huambo province, Lt. -Col. André Pitra, told journalists in July that government forces had made considerable advances against UNITA in the area in 1980, capturing 150 officers and their men as well as destroying their major bases, while the Governor of Bie, Col. Jamba Ya Mina, said that more than 1,000 members of UNITA had surrendered. Lt.-Col. Pitra added that the Government was also concentrating on bringing the peasant population out of the bush whither it had fled and overcoming the distrust of the MPLA-PT which had been instilled in them by UNITA. Some 800,000 peasants had already emerged in the two provinces since the New Year, according to the officials, and many were completely destitute.

The Angolan Foreign Minister, Mr Jorge, told a press conference in Freetown (Sierra Leone) on June 30 following a meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Foreign Ministers [see 30557 A] that Cuban troops would stay in Angola until Namibia was independent and South Africa could no longer threaten Angola militarily; he said, however, that the majority of Cubans in Angola were civilians who would remain even after troops had left. (Dr Savimbi had claimed in November 1979 that there were 34,000 Cubans in Angola, compared with a figure of 20,000–30,000 put forward by Western intelligence sources.)

Reaffirming Angola's relations with Cuba, President dos Santos arrived in Havana on March 17, 1980, for a two-day visit.

Following the arrest of 124 people on June 25 in connexion with a UNITA bombing campaign mounted in Luanda, Huambo and other areas over the past two years [see 29501 A], (i) 16 members of UNITA were executed on Aug. 5 after being sentenced to death on July 29, when seven others received prison sentences of between 12 and 24 years and four were acquitted; and (ii) nine members of UNITA were executed on Aug. 24 after being sentenced on Aug. 21 in Huambo, five others receiving prison terms of between two and 20 years.

In response to the first death sentences UNITA threatened to plant bombs for each of its members condemned, the Angolan authorities reporting on Aug. 11 that a bomb had exploded on the previous night at the installations of the national oil company near Lobito, setting fire to oil tanks. After the executions had been carried out the movement said that its “tribunal of resistance to the Angolan people” had condemned to death and executed 15 prisoners belonging to the government armed forces.

(The death penalty had been restored in Angola in June 1978 by the late President Neto for crimes against state security and endangering the revolution. The penalty applied to civilians as well as foreigners in Angola who “committed treason, spied, damaged military installations or mate’ materiel, exposed the country to armed aggression, or spread false information damaging to the good name of Angola”.)

A communiqué delivered on April 1, 1980, to the office of Agence France-Presse (AFP) in Kinshasa (Zaire) by the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) stated that FLEC's president, Mr Henrique N'Zita Tiago (who had also been declared head of the provisional Cabinda Government established in 1977 — see page 28489), had been mortally wounded on Dec. 21, 1979, in a clash with Cuban forces in the Cabindan bush. FLEC had confirmed Mr Tiago as its president at the second congress of the Cabindan armed forces on Feb. 15–20, 1979, in the “liberated zone” of Safica.

According to a communiqué of Aug. 11, 1979, a new splinter group of FLEC known as the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Cabinda (MPLC) had been established on June 1 by the “Armed Forces for the Liberation of Cabinda” (FALC). It described itself as a “progressive” movement which was not

hostile to the West, said that an executive committee had been elected, headed by Maj. Vicente Balenda, and claimed that FLEC itself was guilty of “irresponsible and overtly imperialist acts” and was exploiting Cabinda's resources. (Other FLEC splinter groups included the Military Command for the Liberation of Cabinda—page 28893.)

Mr Francisco Xauter Lubota, reportedly the leader of FLEC operations in Cabinda, claimed in Brussels in June 1979 that FLEC's forces of about 7,000 men held 30 per cent of the territory of Cabinda and that there were 8,000 Cubans, 2,000 Angolan soldiers and 400 Hungarian military personnel in the enclave. He said that 150,000 Cabindans (half the enclave's population) had fled to Zaïre since 1975, that the Angolan Government was “illegally occupying” the enclave, and that the human rights of the Cabindans had been violated and its people subjected to “Marxist indoctrination” in Cuba and the USSR.—(Times - Guardian - Daily Telegraph - Cape Times - West Africa - Africa Confidential - BBC Summary of World Broadcasts - Le Monde - Financial Times) (*Prev. rep. Government Changes 2950 A, 1/30027 A, 30274 B; South Africa, 29039 A, 29501 A, page 29776, 29913 A; Relations with Zaïre and Zambia 30426 A; OAU Resolutions on South African Incursions 30557 A*)

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