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Internal security situation-Relations with South Africa

Activities of UNITA movement (September 1984-October 1985). Government offensive against UNITA (July-September 1985). Formal withdrawal of South African troops from Angola (April 17). Capture of South African soldier in Cabinda province (May 21). UN Security Council resolutions condemning South African operations in Angola (June 20, Sept. 20 and Oct. 7). Repeal of-Clark amendment-by US Congress (June 11, July 10).-Formation of 'Democratic International ' group (June 1-2). First MPLA-PT national congress (Jan. 14-19). Appointment of Foreign Minister (March 8). Visit by President dos Santos to Mozambique (Dec. 20-21, 1984)[see 33960 A]. Visit by President dos Santos to Cuba (Oct. 24-26, 1985). Death sentences and executions for UNITA members (April 9, Aug. 17).

The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*-UNITA), led by its president Mr Jonas Savimbi, maintained a guerrilla war against the Marxist government of President Eduardo dos Santos in support of its claim to be included in the central government, its activities being marked by an increase in incidents of economic sabotage over the period from October 1984 to September 1985. At an 'extraordinary congress' of the movement held in early November 1984, at the movement's headquarters at Jamba, in the remote south-eastern part of the country, Mr Savimbi declared that UNITA was in a position to be able to attack the capital, Luanda (some 1,300 km to the north-west), with 7,000 troops by late December, and would do so if he was not included in the latest round of US-sponsored negotiations for peace in the region. [For President dos Santos's proposals for a phased withdrawal of the Cuban military presence in Angola (estimated to number some 30,000 troops), which had become a US and South African prerequisite for the implementation of a UN-sponsored independence plan for Namibia, see 33960 A.]

UNITA reported on Jan. 31, 1985, that Brig. Joachim Vinama Chendovava had been sworn in as the new Chief of Staff of the UNITA armed forces.

Major incidents in the guerrilla war are described below.

Bombs planted in the main railway yard of the port of Benguela in late September 1984 destroyed or damaged a considerable amount of rolling stock; the railway line itself, which was an important communications link with the eastern part of the country, had already been put out of operation several times over the previous three years [see map on page 32356].

A number of electricity transmission towers and high-tension cables near the town of Dondo, about 160 km south-east of Luanda, were destroyed on Oct. 8, cutting off electricity supplies to the capital for 48 hours. The official Angolan news agency ANGOP reported disruption to Luanda's power supplies between Nov. 25 and 30, and further interruptions of the power supply, also attributed to sabotage, occurred in mid-March and in late June 1985 (the rebel movement claiming in early July that the latter action had also cut power to the provincial capital of Malanje).

During the Jamba conference in early November Mr Savimbi announced the release of about 12 hostages taken by UNITA in a raid on Novo Redondo, in Cuanza Sul province, in March 1984,.

A force of some 1,500 UNITA guerrillas on Dec. 29, 1984, attacked the diamond-mining complex at Kafunfo, in Lunda Norte province, reportedly holding off a counter-attack by government troops until Dec. 31, when the rebels fled into the bush, taking with them 20 foreign technicians (17 Filipino nationals and three Britons), and two crew members of a US transport plane which had been destroyed by the rebels (apparently in the belief that it was bringing government reinforcements). According to a UNITA statement 130 government troops were killed in the fighting; a government statement claimed that the guerrilla attack had resulted in the deaths of 200 civilians. The hostages were released on March 14 in Jamba, after having been taken on foot to the rebel headquarters; five Portuguese mineworkers who had also been seized by rebels were released at the same time. [For a similar incident at Kafunfo in February 1984, see page 33199.] The release of the hostages was accompanied by a warning from Mr Savimbi to the effect that foreign workers should leave the country, as hostages taken in future would not be guaranteed a safe release.

A government statement issued in early January 1985 claimed that over 3,000 guerrillas had been killed by government forces in the province of Huambo during 1984; the government also claimed to have repulsed a UNITA offensive against the provincial capital of Huambo at the end of the year, killing over 150 rebels

and taking nearly 100 prisoners. In a New Year message, President dos Santos reiterated his rejection of the idea of power-sharing with the rebel movement.

UNITA claimed to have shot down a Boeing 737 aircraft on Feb. 27 as it took off from Lubango, killing all those on board, allegedly including senior government and army officials; a statement from the Angolan state airline, while admitting that the aircraft had had a slight accident on take-off, said that no injuries had been caused.

The rebel movement claimed on March 15 to have shot down a Soviet-made MiG-21MF bomber of the Angolan Air Force near Bié, some 400 km east of Benguela, killing the pilot who was alleged to be Cuban. ANGOP stated that the plane had crashed during a difficult manoeuvre, and that the pilot was an Angolan. In an earlier claim, UNITA said that it had destroyed three MiG-23 fighter aircraft in early September 1984, two of which had also allegedly been shot down in Bié province.

In a communique issued in Lisbon (Portugal) on May 11, UNITA announced that its forces had on the previous day captured the diamond mine at Luo (situated south-east of Lucapa, some 100 km from the border with Zaïre), and had taken prisoner one British engineer; he was freed in early August along with three Portuguese nationals. Subsequent reports suggested that about 10 civilians were killed in the attack. Observers noted that the rebel movement was partly dependent on stolen diamonds as a source of revenue (but was also known to obtain practical and logistical support from South Africa—see below); the tactic of taking prisoner foreign workers was seen partly as a propaganda exercise and partly as an attempt to sabotage the Angolan economy by discouraging foreign countries from supplying skilled workers, particularly in the mining sector. The raid on Luo took place soon after President dos Santos had addressed local officials of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola-Party of Labour (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola-Partido de Trabalho* –MPLA-PT, the sole legal party) in the same area in Lunda Norte province.

Luanda radio reported on Aug. 22 that one person was killed and more than 40 injured in a bomb explosion near a hotel in Huambo on Aug. 20, and attributed the incident to the ‘criminal action of the UNITA bandits’; the radio referred to the rebel movement’s ‘inability to fight directly with the Angolan defence and security forces’ for earlier incident in Huambo in what UNITA described as its urban terrorism campaign, Government offensive against UNITA Reported defeat of government troops

An offensive by the national armed forces (the Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação FAPLA) commenced in mid-July 1985, involving a thrust along the Benguela railway and thence to the town of Cazombo in the east in Moxico province [see map on page 32356] and an attack on the town of Mavinga (situated about 200 km north-west of Jamba) which had a strategically important airbase.

Reports in late September indicated that the government troops (which Mr Savimbi claimed were accompanied by Soviet military advisers), had succeeded in capturing Cazombo from UNITA, whose forces abandoned the town on Sept. 19. A communiqué from Luanda claimed that some 1,300 UNITA rebels had been captured and much territory had been retaken. Subsequent reports, however, revealed that the second part of the government offensive had been halted some 24 km from Mavinga.

At a press conference at Mavinga in early October, Mr Savimbi referred to ‘unprecedented’ Soviet involvement in the FAPLA offensive, and gave details of a fiercely fought pitched battle which had taken place over three days south of the Lomba river, allegedly involving four motorized brigades of FAPLA troops, numbering some 4,600 men, supported by MiG fighter aircraft and Mi-25 helicopter gunships. According to Mr Savimbi, UNITA forces numbering some 5,500 had killed about half of the government troops, including nine Soviet military advisers, for losses of only 410 dead and 822 wounded. He also claimed that UNITA had shot down 17 aircraft and had captured or destroyed 151 army trucks, and that the FAPLA troops had retreated on Sept. 29. According to statements from the Angolan government, however, FAPLA troops had been surprised by a series of South African air raids on their positions between Sept. 28 and Oct. 3; Mr Savimbi denied any such South African involvement, but acknowledged that South African doctors were treating the wounded in the field, and that UNITA had over the previous four weeks received ‘more sophisticated equipment from South Africa, Arab states, and, indirectly, from Europe, than in the previous 10 years’.

Formal disengagement of South African forces from Angola

Under the terms of the February 1984 Lusaka accord between Angola and South Africa[see page 33198]South African troops were finally withdrawn from southern Angola in mid-April 1985.

The last of the remaining forces, comprising some 450 soldiers and 100 vehicles, left the border post of Santa Clara in Angola on April 17 and were received at Oshikango in Namibia by the then Chief of the South African Defence Force (SADF), Gen. Constand Viljoen. Reports indicated that some 60 soldiers

remained with their FAPLA counterparts in order to guard from sabotage attacks the dam at Calueque, on the Angola-Namibia border, which was vital to the operation of the Ruacana hydroelectric scheme. The SADF forces involved in the April 1985 withdrawal had been deployed in southern Angola in December 1983 as part of an offensive against guerrillas of the Namibian independence movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). [For details of 'Operation Askari', and subsequent delays in South African withdrawal, see 33197 A.

The South African government maintained that its delay in withdrawing the last of these troops was the result of the Angolan government's inability or unwillingness to prevent SWAPO fighters from entering the area. Announcing to Parliament on April 15 imminent withdrawal of the troops, Mr Roelof 'Pik' Botha, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared that SWAPO operations in the area had been suppressed, allowing for a permanent withdrawal; the withdrawal was also described as an action which would facilitate the departure of Cuban troops from Angola, but Mr Botha warned that any future SWAPO attacks would be dealt with 'by whatever means are necessary'.

There were subsequent reports from ANGOP that South African aircraft had entered Angolan air space during the weeks following the withdrawal, and the border area remained tense. The South African Minister of Defence, Gen. Magnus Malan, was reported as stating on May 13 that the SADF would send units into Angola again if FAPLA did not succeed in curtailing SWAPO activities in Angola and Namibia, adding that the expertise of the SADF had been improved as a result of its engagements in the area, which had provided a testing ground for South African-made weapons destined for the export market. [For subsequent incursions by South African forces into Angola, in June and September 1985, see 33960 A.] The joint monitoring commission (JMC), which had been set up to monitor the cessation of hostilities in the area and the disengagement of the Angolan and South African forces, was disbanded on May 16.

Discovery of clandestine South African operations in Cabinda province

It was announced on Luanda radio on May 22, 1985, that a FAPLA patrol unit had on May 21 surprised a unit of the SADF in the province of Cabinda (which lay to the north of Angola, separated from the rest of the country by the estuary of the Congo (Zaire) river and a corridor of territory belonging to Zaire).

Describing the soldiers as 'saboteurs' whose purpose was to destroy the oil installations at Malongo, the radio stated that one soldier had been taken prisoner, and two others had been killed; a quantity of ammunition and supplies had also been discovered, which indicated that a party of some nine men had been operating.

Despite initial SADF denials, Gen. Viljoen admitted on May 23 that a contingent of South African forces were involved in 'intelligence-gathering operations' in northern Angola with regard to forces of the African National Congress (the banned anti-apartheid organization) and SWAPO, and 'Russian surrogate' forces which threatened the stability of South Africa and Angola. He also stated that contact with a 'small element' of the intelligence-gathering units had been lost.

The Angolan authorities on May 26 refused a request from Mr Botha for an 'urgent meeting' to discuss the return of the bodies of the dead soldiers (named by the SADF as Mr Louis Pieter van Breda and Mr Rowland Ridgard Liebenberg, no military ranks being given) and for the return of the captured soldier, Capt. Wynand Johannes Petrus du Toit.

At a press conference given in Luanda on May 28, Capt. du Toit declared that he had already participated in several sabotage attacks in Angola and Mozambique from 1982 onwards. The aim of the current operation, he said, had been for a nine-man team under his command to destroy six oil storage tanks in Malongo (which had a capacity of 1,675,000 barrels and were partly operated by the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, a subsidiary of the US Gulf Oil Corporation which was working with the Angolan state oil company Sonangol). Members of the unit had carried UNITA propaganda with them, in order to enable the rebel group subsequently to claim responsibility for the action, had it been successful. The *Financial Times* reported on May 24 that oil produced from offshore installations by the US companies Gulf Oil and Texaco, and onshore at the coastal estuary of the Zaire river by Petrangol (a joint venture between the Belgian company Petrofina and the Angolan state oil company), provided an estimated 80 per cent of Angola's foreign exchange earnings.

Speaking in Parliament on May 28, Gen. Malan denied that the presence of elements of the SADF in Angola was a contravention of the Lusaka accord, and reaffirmed that the men were on a reconnaissance mission necessary to national security. Gen. Malan later suggested that Capt. du Toit had been tortured by his captors until he made a false confession.

US reaction to South African operation-UN Security Council resolutions

A US State Department spokesman on May 24 expressed 'deep displeasure' over the Cabinda incident, and a formal protest was lodged in Pretoria by the US ambassador to South Africa, Mr Herman Nickel. The South African incursion had, according to US officials, risked the lives of US personnel at the oil base, while placing in jeopardy plans for peace in the area.

The UN Security Council on June 20 unanimously adopted Resolution 567 (1985) condemning South Africa for this most recent 'act of aggression' against the territory of Angola, which it described as a 'flagrant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country', which had seriously endangered international peace and security.

Two further resolutions criticizing South African involvement in Angola were adopted unanimously by the Security Council on Sept. 20 and Oct. 7.

Resolution 571 (1985) on Sept. 20, sponsored by the non-aligned members of the Council, was adopted in the context of a debate concerning a complaint against South Africa by Angola over the South African invasion of mid-September[see 33960 A]. According to the South African authorities, this operation, which involved a force of some 500 troops, was in response to an increase in 'abductions, intimidation and sabotage' on the part of SWAPO; the troops were withdrawn by Sept. 21, but on Sept. 19 the Angolan Defence Ministry alleged that South African troops were actively engaged in helping UNITA in the south-east, some 240 km from the Namibian border [see above]. The resolution condemned South Africa for its 'premeditated, persistent and sustained armed invasions' of Angola; condemned South Africa's use of the 'international territory of Namibia' as a springboard for carrying out destabilization of Angola; demanded the removal of all South African forces from Angola; requested all UN member states to extend assistance to Angola and other 'front-line' states neighbouring South Africa in the face of South African aggression (the US abstaining in a separate vote on this clause, which was passed by 14 votes to none); and called for compensation to be paid to Angola for the 'damage to life and property resulting from these acts of aggression'.

Resolution 574 (1985) on Oct. 7, proposed by the non-aligned members following a request from Angola for a meeting of the Council, reiterated earlier condemnation of South Africa, this time with reference to the latest reports of South African air raids on FAPLA troops fighting against UNITA [see above]. In a separate vote the USA again abstained on a paragraph which renewed the previous request for UN member states to extend 'all necessary assistance' to Angola 'in order to strengthen its defence capability in the face of South Africa's escalating acts of aggression and the occupation of parts of its territory by South African military forces'.

A UN Commission of Inquiry set up under Resolution 571 concluded a 10-day fact-finding visit to the provinces of Cunene, Huila, and Cuando Cubango on Oct. 23, at the end of which it was reported that South Africa would be pressed to pay compensation for damage caused to Angola.

South African admissions of assistance to UNITA

In a statement issued in Pretoria (South Africa) on Sept. 20, 1985, Gen. Malan admitted publicly that South Africa provided material, humanitarian and moral help to UNITA; this help had been provided for 'a number of years', and moreover would not be suspended until all foreign forces had been withdrawn from Angola.

According to Gen. Malan, support for UNITA was intended to arrest foreign interference by 'Cuban and other communist' powers in Angola, and sought to halt 'Marxist infiltration and expansionism'.

President Botha, addressing a congress of the South African ruling National Party in Port Elizabeth on Oct. 1, declared that his government could not remain inactive in the light of Cuban and Soviet involvement in Angola, and called upon other African states and the USA to join forces in resisting what he described as a 'Soviet thrust' in southern Africa.

Repeal of 'Clark amendment' by US Congress Formation of 'Democratic International'

The US Senate voted on June 11, 1985, by 63 to 34, and the House of Representatives on July 10 by 236 to 185, to repeal the so-called Clark amendment (named after its sponsor, former Democratic Senator Dick Clark of Iowa), which prohibited US military and financial support for UNITA.

The legislation had first been enacted in 1976 at a time when the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had been providing covert military aid to the rebel movement. The repeal (which was subsequently incorporated into the Foreign Aid Authorization Bill signed by President Reagan on Aug. 8), was seen as likely to give extra leverage to US efforts to secure the departure of Cuban troops from Angola; some observers suggested, on the other hand, that the possibility of US aid to the rebel movement would harden the Angolan government's attitude to the withdrawal of the Cubans. State Department officials announced

that the Reagan administration was in favour of the repeal, but denied that there were any current plans to resume aid to UNITA.

The Angolan government on July 13 announced that it had broken off all contacts with the USA in protest at the congressional votes.

Although the two countries did not have diplomatic relations, the USA had acted as an intermediary between Angola and South Africa (which similarly did not maintain diplomatic relations with each other) in attempts to agree a settlement on the issue of Namibian independence. The Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Afonso van Dunem [for whose appointment see below], had stated on June 21 that his government remained committed to a peaceful negotiated settlement in the area, and that President dos Santos's compromise solution of November 1984,[see 33960 A] remained 'on the table'. (The South African government had reported that as a result of the Cabinda incident the Angolan government no longer wished to negotiate a solution, and had interpreted this as indicating that it had never been serious about the negotiations.) At a press conference in Jamba on Nov. 11, 1985, Mr Savimbi appealed for US military aid for his movement, declaring that there were now no prospects for a negotiated peace settlement in Angola.

Mr Savimbi was host to a conference in Jamba, on June 1–2, of anti-government guerrilla groups from Afghanistan, Laos and Nicaragua, as well as UNITA, at which the formation of an alliance called the 'Democratic International' was announced, whose aim was to achieve 'independence from Soviet colonialism' for these and other countries with similar governments.

The conference was held under the auspices of a US conservative organization calling itself 'Citizens for America' (led by Mr Lewis Lehrman, who in 1982 had been an unsuccessful candidate for the post of governor of New York). Although the event was described by the US embassy in Pretoria as a 'private venture', Mr Lehrman read out to the conference a letter of support which President Reagan had addressed to him.

First national party congress-Appointment of new Foreign Minister

President dos Santos on Jan. 14, 1985, addressed the first national congress of the MPLA-PT, held in Luanda on Jan. 14–19 [see 30832 A] for first extraordinary congress, held in December 1980, .

President dos Santos in his opening address described UNITA as a South African instrument for 'military destabilization to prevent the social and economic development of Angola', and called for the intensification of party activity, the education of party members in Marxism-Leninism being a major priority. President dos Santos also spoke of the Cuban 'sacrifices made for the Angolan revolution', and affirmed that the Soviet Union continued to be the main supplier of military equipment to Angola.

Mr van Dunem was on March 8 appointed Minister of External Affairs.

The previous incumbent, Mr Paolo Teixeira Jorge, had been dismissed in October 1984[see page 33199] and the post had been held in the interim by President dos Santos. Mr van Dunem was secretary for external affairs on the MPLA-PT central committee. At the same time Mr Fernando José da Franca Dias van Dunem, hitherto ambassador to Portugal, was appointed one of two Deputy Ministers of External Affairs.

Foreign relations

President dos Santos on Dec. 20–21, 1984, visited Mozambique, where his discussions with President Machel covered the activities of South-African supported anti-government guerrillas and other security concerns.

A joint communique declared Angola's 'solidarity with the efforts of Mozambique to ensure the full implementation of the Nkomati accord' (the Mozambique-South Africa non-aggression pact of March 1984, for details of which see 32835 A); President Machel expressed support for the Angolan compromise proposals for the withdrawal of Cuban troops, while both countries reaffirmed their support for the ANC and for SWAPO.

Situation of Angolan refugees in Zaïre

According to a spokesman for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) the situation of some 30,000 Angolan refugees in the remote Shaba region of Zaïre was extremely serious by October 1984, as a result of drought and malnutrition; by early February 1985 there were an estimated 54,000 refugees in the province, and this number had increased to an estimated 70,000 by August 1985, attributable to an upsurge in UNITA activities near the border with Zaïre [see above]. The UNHCR launched a campaign in early February 1985 to transfer some of the refugees from the border area to safer regions within Zaïre. [For security agreement signed with Zaïre in February 1985, see 33572 A.]

President dos Santos's visit to Cuba

During the course of a visit to Cuba on Oct. 24–26, 1985, President Dos Santos and President Castro of Cuba discussed South African policy towards Angola and other neighbouring states, and also the problem of the foreign debt of the developing countries. A protocol had been signed prior to the Angolan President's visit as part of the joint intergovernmental commission on economic, scientific and technical co-operation. For previous visits by President dos Santos to Cuba, in March 1980 and March 1984, see 30549 A; 3319 A.]

Death sentences for alleged UNITA supporters

Death sentences were passed on five alleged UNITA 'bandits' on April 9, 1985, and two others received prison sentences of 12 and 20 years, having been found guilty by a military tribunal of 'crimes against the security of the state' in the Huambo area. Three members of UNITA who had been sentenced to death in December 1984 were executed by firing squad on Aug. 17. (Times-Financial Times-International Herald Tribune-New York Times-Le Monde Cape-Times- Africa Research Bulletin Africa Economic Digest-BBC Summary of World Broadcasts-UN Information Centre, London-UN Information Service, Vienna)
Prev. rep. 33197 A; Accession to Lome Convention 33683 A)

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