STATEMENT BY MIGUEL NETO, AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA TO
THE MIDDLE EAST, and DELEGATE OF THE MPLA to the ANGOLA SUPPORT CONFERENCE,
CHICAGO, MAY 28-30, 1976

Comrades, Friends,

I want to express today some things about our political line, our affairs in Angola, our problems, and also the questions and difficulties that imperialism raises in our country. It is with extreme appreciation that the delegation of the People's Republic of Angola participates in this solidarity conference organized by our friends with the intention of making clear the struggle in Angola and its reason. It also gives us the opportunity to hear our just voice here in the United States of America. We extend our revolutionary greetings towards the comrades who organized this meeting because we believe that when you defend the Angolan cause it is not only significant for us, the Angolan people, but also for you who have been struggling so long in your country for real independence, democracy and social justice.

We people of Angola, we the MPLA, will never forget the dimension of struggle. For example, our brothers here who have the same origin - whose ancestors came as slaves - also have African mothers, are our friends here without ambition and without pressure from foreign countries. As you know, in our struggle, solidarity is extended without any doubt to any oppressed people in struggle, to comrades who support liberation, and it means for us that you are fighting for independence in the world. As an American people who are part of the African continent, you participate also.

Despite all maneuvers of the imperialists to sabotage our country and assassinate our leadership, we are more clear and more encouraged than ever to combat, with the persistence of our people led by the MPLA and Comrade Agostinho Neto and with our clear political line on who are the Angolan people, what are our needs, and what is our objective, and what we want to create in the new society of Angola. These fundamental points are very clear in the consciousness of our people, and are what has inspired our determination and led us to achieve complete independence. Today the people of Angola, the People's Republic of Angola, is free from military invasion by Zaire and South Africa who along with the Portuguese army and the forces of UNITA and UPA-FNLA thought they could defeat us. These invasions by western imperialism into our homeland had the objective of destroying the leaders and militants of the MPLA. Our struggle for independence created the necessity for imperialism to delete our political line and attempt to impose a new form of exploitation in the form of neo-colonialism. This was completely against the majority of the Angolan people. But with our victory against U.S. imperialism and its puppets, UNITA, UPA-FNLA, FLEC, South Africa, Zaire and their mercenary armies, we now have a free and independent country.

MPLA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 549, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10025
Essential to the Angolan people today is the taking control of our economy as this is one of our main problems in taking our homeland into our own hands. Therefore, we are continuing the struggle by laying the foundation for building a socialist society in Angola. This is the clear option of our people, because we consider it the only way to achieve complete emancipation of the people. Because of this option, we regard the strong opposition of imperialism as natural. However, this opposition takes on various forms: economic boycott, sabotage, corruption, and assassination; all precisely with the intention to create a division within our people, to reduce the strong position inside the country that the MPLA, the Angolan people, began to build a long time ago.

Friends, our government - the People's Republic of Angola, and our people - the MPLA know well the maneuvers of imperialism and we are up to now organized and ready at any moment to put down immediately such maneuvers. The People's Republic of Angola constitutes an independent country - which means we are an independent people. As such, we don't allow any influence or any dependence, from any block or any country. Our options and our policies are our own. We will never accept interference in our affairs. We are confident and we are firm in our belief that non-alignment is very important for us especially, and for African countries. But not just for Africa, this should be important for all people all over the world who are concerned about real democracy at this time. There is no more time for people of the world to be oppressed. So we have adopted this political orientation in international affairs. We are able to establish diplomatic relations, economic and cultural relations with all countries in the world, independently of their social and political systems. Within the principle of mutual independence and national sovereignty of each state, the Angolan people accept and adopt the principle of non-alignment as our main tenent of international policy for the establishment of friendship with each state.

With this political action, and with the Angolan people organized around the MPLA and led by President Doctor Agostinho Neto in building 'poder popular', we can begin to create in our society a new man, a free man, without any racial and tribal constraints. So, we have a very big and very long term problem. We are in a long stage of the development of the country, and the MPLA feels that it is extremely important that we adopt this principle stance towards the world. This also means for us that the proletariat is very important, and that in the struggle for reconstruction and afterwards, the essential thing is democracy.

Comrades, we need many things. We were attacked by the imperialist forces on many fronts. Today, cities, hospitals, bridges, all forms of transportation, our agriculture, our economy, and more have been destroyed. Today, we begin a new life... We begin to construct.
a whole country that the Portuguese government never did during 500 years. For example, more than 90 percent of our people do not know how to read and are not able to be fully aware of all aspects of our programs for development. Our job is now to educate our people. Today we begin a new life. After our second war of liberation, the majority of our population are now children and mothers. In one year this war killed so many of our people that approximately 25 percent of our mothers lost their husbands, particularly in the south. Even myself, my father was killed two months ago. For my mother and all my family, this has been the normal situation in our country during those last months. The majority of my family was arrested by UNITA and most of the men were killed. All this only demonstrated to us the intent and the intensity of the imperialists in our country.

However, the reason for our meeting is to discuss your proposals to help us in this period of reconstruction. We, as the People's Republic of Angola, have a special problem for our comrades in struggle here who offer us this important solidarity. We feel we must concentrate in a special sector for concrete help. Therefore, as you know, in this most recent war many things were destroyed by the South African troops, especially in our hospitals -- such as beds, surgical equipment -- everything... All that these troops could transport, they took. Now we have some very big buildings with nothing inside them. Also, you know that during colonialism, many things that the Portuguese did were only for themselves, nothing was for the Angolan people. This is not an exaggeration, it is real. Now, for example, when a person goes to the hospital for treatment, the situation is very bad. The doctor may give the person a prescription and a room with no bed or equipment in it.

Part of my job here is to coordinate with you some support for our health problems which are primary. We need many things and we have only 60 doctors in the whole country and 6 hospitals for about 6.5 million people. It would be good if we can arrange something in this country and after this meeting I will be able to discuss in more detail with the comrades who are interested in this kind of support.

Another area you can help us in involves a political question, and that is our admission to the United Nations. This is very important for us, and you know better than me the intention of the US government which has threatened to use the veto to prevent our entry into the UN. This strategy is simply another maneuver of the imperialist forces who do not want to give us the opportunity to become integrated into the international community. As you also know, the majority of the people and countries, and popular democratic organizations in the world recognize the MPLA as a legitimate government. It is not something we can measure, but it is real. What we are, you know very well. Our job since 1956 has been to defend our people and our interests as a true and complete Angolan nation. Right now Mr. Henry Kissinger does not want to permit this reality to exist. But I think here you can do very important work, by organizing something like a campaign to mobilize people to support our entry to the UN. While we are certain of ourselves, we must continue to struggle against the forces of imperialism which will not stop with this maneuver.
STATEMENT BY ASSUNCAO VAHEKENI, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA, AND DELEGATE OF THE MPLA AT THE ANGOLA SUPPORT CONFERENCE

(Translated from Portuguese by Bishop Ralph Dodge)

At this time we feel a great satisfaction. I, in particular, feel very happy after 14 years of a liberation war followed by a second war against the imperialist forces within Angola, a war fought with many of the arms supplied by this country (the U.S.), arms that were used to kill and torture our people, that in this same country we meet people like you who sympathize with our people. This is very important for us. Once again, it is clear that oppressed people have no frontiers, no borders.

In our country we are living in very difficult and sad moments. We were attacked on every side. Our people have suffered; our children without parents, our women without husbands, and many broken families -- these are only some of our problems. Imperialism did everything possible to suffocate us. Yet when we felt overcome by imperialism, the desire for liberation showed us that this desire is invincible. Although we have been through very difficult situations, today we have a united and well organized people who are determined to continue the struggle until there is final victory. (Applause)

For us, and especially for the female members of our delegation, it is a great pleasure for us to see so many women in this conference expressing their solidarity with our people (Applause). Our Angolan women are organized and prepared to continue the struggle for complete liberation. When I return to our country, I will say to our comrades in OMA that in America also, the women are organized. It is certain that the purpose for our coming here will be recognized by the women in Angola through our media which will spread this news throughout the world. You will be very pleased that your act of solidarity here with this conference will be much appreciated by the people in my country and by our President Comrade Agostinho Neto.

To conclude, I want to again express my own satisfaction to all those present at this demonstration of solidarity for the people of Angola who in this moment are living in such terrible conditions. All of them will appreciate this common spirit with which we are all joined together.

Thank you very much.

*****

The MPLA Solidarity Committee has just received 50 copies of a record of traditional Angolan music which was recorded by the JMPLA (youth organization of the MPLA) in Luanda after independence. The record, "Vitoria et Certe" is available for $4 PLUS 50¢ POSTAGE from the Committee. Order immediately if you want to be sure to receive a copy.

********************************************************************
A reporting of the question and answer period following the presentation by the Angolans, as well as a report on the Friday night session on US Policy toward Southern Africa, with a speech by Cong. John Conyers, will be in the next newsletter.

PANAL PRESENTATION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ANGOLA’S VICTORY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA First session: Saturday afternoon

Two Zimbabweans, James Moyo and Davis M’Gabe, and two South Africans, Rhodes Gxoyia and Wardle Kuse spoke on the significance of the Angolan victory for the liberation struggle now going on in their own countries. Moyo told us that they know from the Angolan experience that the day the colonialists surrender will not be the end of the war of liberation, because the agents of capitalism will still be there. Moyo also stressed the importance of victories being won on the battlefield.

Moyo stated that unity in struggle is of crucial importance but that this cannot be achieved through outside pressures and negotiation. Unity can only be fully realized through concrete activity, such as that now being achieved by the military forces of ZANU and ZAPU joining together in ZIFA (Zimbabwe Independence People’s Army), Moyo said.

Other important lessons from Angola which were mentioned include understanding the importance of international solidarity to Angola’s victory, exemplified by the assistance given by Cuba, the Soviet Union, and progressive African countries. Angola’s reconstruction also provides a model of socialist organization and development, a model which is most meaningful for a young country seeking true independence.

Davis M’Gabe advised us to analyze the colonial situation in Southern Africa very carefully. If we did, he asserted, we would find that the colonial settlers would not give up their power without a fight, even to the elite among the indigenous people. Only with this understanding, he said, can we fully and adequately prepare for the struggle leading to victory and freedom.

Rhodes Gxoyia emphasized that the Angola struggle must be viewed as a continuation of years of struggle for liberation in Southern Africa. Mercenaries from Johannesburg operated in the Congo in the early 1960’s against the Lumumba forces. Throughout its history, the CIA sought to destabilize regimes sympathetic to liberation movements. There is a long history of struggle and it will continue. Armed resistance in Zimbabwe and South Africa will someday achieve the victory that has now been won in Angola.

WORKSHOP REPORT: SECOND SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The second session on Saturday afternoon consisted of four workshops: Medical Assistance; Recognition and Political Support; Material Assistance; and Information and Dispelling Myths about the F.L.A. For many of the participants these sessions were the most
The Medical Aid workshop included mostly health workers, both professional and paramedic, who are interested in offering their services to Angola, or in initiating local health groups around medical aid to Angola. The workshop had two very helpful resource people, Charles Swift, who spent 8 years in Tanzania in the medical field, and James Garret, who recently returned from Angola and was able to give us a brief survey of the current health conditions in Angola. In addition, Comrade Ambassador Neto, who attended this workshop for a short period, provided us with a list of both long-term and immediate health needs for the People's Republic of Angola. The list included everything from ambulances, Landrovers, and hospital beds to toothpaste.

Members of the workshop aim to set up local health support committees in their areas, either as part of larger or existing organizations, or as independent bodies with the following concrete objectives adopted by the workshop as a whole: 1) to establish a means of screening and setting up a program of political education for medical personnel interested in going to Angola (this responsibility was assumed by the Ad Hoc Committee for Medical Aid to Angola in New York); 2) to raise the level of consciousness of the local community around health conditions in Angola, and 3) to make concrete efforts towards sending personnel, medical supplies, or monies to Angola. The workshop adopted as a single concrete goal to raise $11,000 by November 11, 1976 which is the 11th day of the 11th month of the 1st anniversary of the independence of the People's Republic of Angola.

REPORT OF THE RECOGNITION AND POLITICAL SUPPORT WORKSHOP

I. Common Agreements: We commit ourselves to work for U.S. recognition of the People's Republic of Angola (PRA) and U.S. support for Angola's United Nations membership. Politically these two issues are linked; but of the two, UN membership is of greater importance to the PRA as Ambassador Neto told the workshop.

II. Proposals:
A. People to begin work immediately in their local communities for U.S. recognition and UN membership. Possible methods include petitions and demonstrations, lobbying Congressional representatives, publicizing these issues in the local media, and working with other organizations and constituencies.

B. In order to coordinate our efforts to immediately form a small committee from one area of the country which can carry out this task. Its duties would be to coordinate activity and to write up a position paper on why it is important to campaign for Angolan membership in the United Nations and recognition by the United
States, linking these political questions to domestic issues as well as other kinds of support for the FPA. It was suggested that a working group be formed in New York to develop a strategy campaign for Angola UN membership, and a group in Washington, D.C. come together to work out a strategy to build political support in Congress.

**REPORT FROM THE WORKSHOP ON MATERIAL ASSISTANCE**

Ambassador Neto, in discussion with workshop members, said the FRA had given top priority in its reconstruction program to the agricultural sector of the Angolan economy. Thus help would be needed in that area. Regarding technical assistance, Ambassador Neto said that possibly a program could be developed by progressive forces in this country. He indicated, however, that the MPLA would be selective regarding the participants. In particular, he said, the MPLA would pay as much attention to the political consciousness of those involved in such a program as their skills.

Recommendations from the workshop were that a committee be created or a particular organization be charged with the responsibility of establishing a network to send material support to Angola. This group should focus on fund raising for agricultural equipment. Funds are to be sent directly to the FRA with the MPLA representative in this country being kept informed of all activities in this regard. The co-ordinating body should also prepare a list of organizations and individuals interested in material support projects.

**WORKSHOP ON INFORMATION: DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT THE MPLA**

Important areas of discussion included the need to develop materials which would be effective in third world and working class communities. A request was made for an MPLA representative to engage in a speaking tour addressed primarily to community based organizations. Bob Vanliew, filmmaker of A Luta Continua, proposed a coordinated premiere showing of his soon to be finished film on the independence of Mozambique. Proceeds would go towards the construction of a maternity clinic in Mozambique. Afterwards the film would be available for educational and fundraising programs relating to Angola.

**SUNDAY MORNING: FINAL SESSION**

On Sunday the conference endorsed plans to develop a national co-ordinating mechanism to increase the effectiveness of work which has already been initiated by many groups to support the People's Republic of Angola. A selection of groups from among those who attended a conference on Angola in Havana, Cuba last February (see ANS Mar. 4) and from the Chicago Angola Support Conference will meet soon to work out the structures and representation of this new body. More information on developments in this regard will be in the next newsletter.

**CLOSING REMARKS** -- Just before the conference ended, Ambassador Neto spoke again. "We shall meet again," he said, ... "for we are comrades in struggle and our solidarity is important."
ANGOLAN MILITARY LEADERS REPORT FLEC, UNITA STILL ACTIVE; LUANDA DELINEATES POLICY TOWARD GULF OIL

LUANDA, Angola (LNS) -- In the past several weeks there have been increasing references by Angolan leaders to continuing military problems in several parts of the country. Recently, President Agostinho Neto referred obliquely to threats from the north and south, but two Angolan military commanders have spoken more openly of the problem.

Reports have filtered out of the north, in particular, that FLEC (the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda) is continuing its activities. FLEC, widely acknowledged to have Western and Zairean backing, is fighting for the secession of the oil-rich enclave.

In early May, Commander Monstro Imortal (who spent over a decade fighting the Portuguese, FNLA, and the Zairean army, avoiding death countless times -- thus the name Monstro Imortal) said that, besides the ambushes and mining that have been carried out by FLEC, Zaire has attacked MPLA units in Cabinda with artillery.

"FLEC in Cabinda could not exist without external support," he said. "Zaire is being used as a base by FLEC because this country [Zaire] always manifested its intention of gaining possession of Cabinda to control its petroleum."

At the end of the recent war, Zaire and Angola signed agreements in which Zaire said it would end its support of FLEC and FNLA (Front for the National Liberation of Angola). Zaire had strongly supported both groups against the MPLA. Now it appears that Zaire is still tacitly supporting FLEC, and indications are that there could be military activity at other spots along Angola's immense border with Zaire in the future.

Monstro Imortal, like many other Angolan leaders, thinks that because the West doesn't want to lose Cabinda, Zaire simply can't fulfill its agreement with Angola, and that Cabinda will be the center of provocations for some time to come.

At the same time, there is continued military activity in the south and east. MPLA fighters, and possibly some Cuban soldiers, are still dying in the 'fight against remnants of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA (Union for the Total Independence of Angola). Savimbi had pledged earlier this year that UNITA would continue its fight in a guerrilla war throughout southern Angola. Since the war ended in February, many reports have arrived in Luanda of scattered guerrilla activity in the south. The management of the Benguela Railway has also confirmed that its trains have been attacked at least twice in the past two months, and apparently once the locomotive was blown off the tracks.

Although UNITA (and FNLA) "were not popular organizations and never will be," said MPLA Defense Minister Iko Carreira recently, "what is possible is the permanence, still for a certain time, of groups linked to a certain type of ethnic, tribal leadership -- groups linked to the West -- which can profit by certain characteristics of our country to establish a climate of instability here and there."

Carreira, also one of the oldest and most well-respected guerrilla leaders of MPLA, said that the position of neighboring countries to these groups was unclear. "They could have support from other countries," he said, referring to Zambia and South Africa.

Gulf & Angola

"Let's talk a little about oil," Angola's Prime Minister Lopo Do Nascimento said in Cabinda on May 13. Nascimento discussed, in the most open fashion yet of any Angolan leader, the relationship of the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company to the new MPLA government.

"Some comrades will ask, 'So Gulf left [during the war], but now they are going to bring Gulf back again. Why is this?" Nascimento told a large crowd in Cabinda City.

He went on to say that the state of Angola owned 55% of Cabinda Gulf Oil, under the concessions proffered Gulf by the previous Portuguese colonialist administration. MPLA leaders are not happy with the present contracts, and think they will have to change. They are presently studying the matter.

Before Gulf's final pullout at the request of the U.S. State Department in late December of 1975, Angolan leaders say the company's rhythm of production had diminished throughout the previous year. Nascimento said that 80% of Angola's foreign exchange and of its budget came from oil receipts. Gulf's decision to leave cut this important economic source off alter-
gether, and at the same time, because Cabinda supplies 3/4 of the oil that is refined in Angola and used internally, Gulf's pullout was a strategic blow to MPLA's conduct of the war. And the problem spiraled, for the lack of oil receipts made it all the more difficult for MPLA to buy oil from other sources.

Once MPLA's victory became apparent, Gulf made no attempt to hide its desire to regain control of the operation in Cabinda. Gulf receives fully 10% of its foreign earnings in oil from that operation.

But because of Gulf's previous conduct, Nascimento said, "We told them, 'We have to discuss new conditions for your work in Angola. We have to discuss a new contract. But in order to discuss a new contract, you have to start production of oil again rapidly, and while you are producing, we'll talk.'"

Each day that the wells are closed, the government of Angola loses approximately $1.4 million. "We simply can't afford the luxury of losing so much money," Nascimento said. At the same time he pointed out that the longer the installations are closed, the more difficult and the more expensive it is to get them going again.

Gulf has now begun its operations, however, and is presently pumping approximately half the 150,000 barrels a day it says were pumped at the height of its operations before the war. Gulf's contract expires in six months, during which time discussions will continue and Angola will set up a new state oil company, SONANGOL.

"The U.S. says that the Cubans came here to exploit Angola," he said, "but Cuba doesn't have any concessions in Angola, neither in oil, in mines, or in the forests. They are here with clean hands.

"It's the Americans that have the concessions, not the Cubans. The Cubans don't have them, nor will they have them. They will return to their country some day -- when we decide -- in the same way that they came, friends of our people, and without dollars in their pockets."

Nascimento also reacted to the charge that the Cubans were mercenaries, like the individuals who came from Europe and North America to fight for UNITA and FNLA.