

# ACTION ALERT

## THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA

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Since the July 1985 repeal of the Clark Amendment prohibition on U.S. intervention in Angola, conservatives in Congress have launched a drive to funnel aid to UNITA, the South African-backed rebels fighting the Angolan government. Five pro-UNITA measures are pending in Congress:

- \*\*HR 3475** — introduced 1 October by Rep. Claude Pepper (D-FL); to provide \$27 dollars in "humanitarian aid" to UNITA;
- \*\*HR 3598** — introduced 22 October by Rep. Bill McCollum (R-FL); to impose economic sanctions on Angola;
- \*\*HR 3609** — introduced 23 October by Rep. Mark Siljander (R-MI); to provide \$27 million in military aid to UNITA;
- \*\*HR 3725** — introduced 12 November by Rep. Bob Dornan (R-CA); to provide \$27 million in humanitarian aid and \$19.1 million in military aid to UNITA;
- \*\*SRes 280** — introduced 19 December by Sen. Bob Dole (R-KS); to commit Congress to aiding UNITA in "early 1986" if the Angolan government does not initiate talks with UNITA.

In addition, Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY) has introduced **HR 3690** which would prohibit overt or covert U.S. aid to Angola.

The end-of-session Congressional workload and the priority given to budget legislation delayed action on these measures. All of them will be pending, however, when the Second Session begins on 21 January.

In addition, the Reagan administration is pressing ahead with plans to allocate covert aid to UNITA. Press reports indicate that a preliminary inter-agency decision was taken in mid-November to award roughly \$15 million to UNITA. Final authorization is expected sometime this month. That decision must be reviewed by the House and Senate Select Committees on Intelligence. Although the Intelligence Committees are not able to veto covert aid programs, strong opposition in the committees could raise the political costs of such aid and force the administration to back down.

A number of right-wing groups, endeavoring to make support for UNITA the anti-communist litmus test of this election year, have organized a lobbying tour for UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi. **Savimbi is expected to arrive in Washington on 28 January and stay for one week.** Given the recent actions in Congress and the growth of conservative influence on Capitol Hill, **Savimbi's tour has the potential to set the struggle for peace and justice in southern Africa back ten years.**

The Reagan administration is attempting to assist its friends in Pretoria by blaming the Soviet Union for the ongoing warfare in southern Africa in an effort to obscure South Africa's role in the region's strife. As it struggles to suppress growing unrest at home, South Africa's minority regime is having increasing difficulty financing its war of destabilization in Angola—a war in which UNITA figures prominently. By funding UNITA, the U.S. would be absorbing some of the costs of apartheid expansionism at this crucial moment. **Aid to UNITA is aid to South Africa!**

Your assistance is most urgently needed in the campaign to expose the truth about Savimbi and to stop a U.S.—South African alliance in the region. WOA urges you to:

**1 Call the White House Hotline (202/456-7639) during the week of Savimbi's trip** to express strong opposition to any form of U.S. aid—overt or covert, "humanitarian" or military—to UNITA. Point out that aid to UNITA constitutes aid to South Africa.

**2 Hold a teach-in on Angola and UNITA** during Savimbi's visit. Invite local academics or other speakers with a knowledge of southern Africa. Extend personal invitations to local officials to attend, either to discuss U.S. regional policy or simply to learn about the issue. Alternatively, **organize an ecumenical candlelight vigil** at a local church or Federal Building in support of peace in southern Africa. Such vigils, a target of police attacks in South Africa, are a particularly dramatic method of expressing solidarity with the struggle against apartheid aggression.

**3 Set up a letter-writing party** either in conjunction with an educational evening or as a separate event. Have available paper, envelopes, pens, stamps, names and addresses of your Senators and local Representative(s), and copies of the enclosed sample letter. Encourage people to use the sample letter as a model, but not to copy it verbatim. (A number of unique, personal letters has more impact on a Congressional office than a flood of identical ones.) If your organization is unable to subsidize the stamps, have a collection box available so that participants can deposit change to cover costs. In addition to writing to your own members of Congress, you should encourage letters to House Intelligence Committee Chair Lee Hamilton (D-IN), his Senate counterpart, Dave Durenberger (R-MN), House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Dante Fascell (D-FL), and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Richard Lugar (R-IN).

**4 Arrange to visit—or at least call—the home offices of your Senators and Representative(s) on 5 February** to discuss Angola and to urge opposition to UNITA aid. These visits will coincide with a national lobbying day on Capitol Hill being organized by WOA.

**5 Seek maximum media exposure to counter the sympathetic coverage the press will almost certainly give to Savimbi's visit.** Watch your local paper for articles about Savimbi and Angola and use the enclosed materials to prepare letters to the Editor and Op-Ed pieces (particularly ones designed to respond to articles). **Compile a list of radio call-in shows in your area and arrange for people to call-in to talk about UNITA's role in South Africa's regional war.** Also, please send a copy of your list to the Washington Office on Africa so that we may update our files.



# FACT SHEET

## ANGOLA and UNITA

Armed opposition to Portugal's colonial rule began in earnest in 1961. Three major nationalist movements subsequently emerged: the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) under the leadership of Holden Roberto; the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) led by Dr. Agostinho Neto; and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) headed by Jonas Savimbi. The FNLA and UNITA received aid from the US and China, while the MPLA received support from the Soviet Union. On January 15, 1975, all three liberation movements signed the "Alvor Accord", a peace agreement calling for Portuguese-supervised elections followed by independence on November 11.

### What happened to the Alvor Accord?

On January 26, 1975 in an attempt to strengthen the FNLA's position during the run-up to national elections, the CIA sent \$300,000 to Roberto and convinced the FNLA to attack the MPLA. In response to this treachery, the Soviet Union increased arms shipments to the MPLA, and Soviet and Cuban advisors were sent to Angola. Over the next year, the CIA spent \$31.7 million in support of the FNLA and UNITA, recruited mercenary forces, and enlisted the aid of two Zairian battalions and a South African armored column in an unsuccessful endeavor to evict the MPLA from Luanda.

### Why are Cuban troops in Angola?

Although a few Cuban advisors were in Angola from early 1975, the MPLA did not request combat troops until October 1975, **after** the MPLA had already established control over much of Angola and **after** South Africa's invasion had penetrated quite deeply into Angola.

South Africa has invaded Angola on numerous occasions since independence, and the Cuban force has been maintained as a rear-guard for Angolan combat troops. Both Havana and Luanda have repeatedly stated that Cuban troops will withdraw once the threat of South African invasion of Angola is diminished through the creation of an independent Namibia.

### What has U.S. policy been toward Angola since 1975?

In January, 1976, U.S. Congress members, upon learning that they had been systematically deceived by the CIA about the nature and extent of U.S. involvement, voted to block future funding for the Angola program (the "Clark Amendment"). However, the U.S. refused to recognize Angola's new government, and **it remains the only country besides South Africa to fail to do so.** In July 1985, Congress voted to repeal the Clark Amendment.

### What is the political orientation of the MPLA government?

Although the MPLA government professes socialist principles, the constitution and government policy preserve a mixed economy with state, co-operative, and private sectors. U.S. investment presently exceeds \$500 million, and, according to David Rockefeller, "Angola is trying to facilitate a larger Western role in its economy through policies promoting greater privatization and reliance on market mechanisms." **The U.S. is Angola's largest trading partner,** due partly to expanding Export-Import Bank credits. In October, 1985, the Ex-Im Bank joined with five other U.S. banks to arrange \$350 million in new loans for the development of Angola's oil fields.

### **What is the present military situation in Angola?**

Since 1975, South Africa has waged a war of attrition and destabilization against Angola, both directly, through invasions, and indirectly, through sustaining support for UNITA. A recent Angolan government offensive against UNITA drove the rebels into the southeastern corner of Angola, but was stopped short of evicting them altogether by a massive South African air strike and direct intervention by Pretoria's troops.

### **What is the political orientation of UNITA?**

UNITA's leader, Jonas Savimbi, has changed his politics repeatedly to pander to potential backers. In 1962, Savimbi sought aid from American friends by promising to push communism out of Africa. Two years later, however, Savimbi broke with the FNLA on the grounds that it was deeply infiltrated by the CIA, "the notorious agents of imperialism." In the early 1970s, when UNITA was courting Chinese support, UNITA's official organ, Kwacha-Angola, was filled with Maoist dogma—in spite of the fact that UNITA was attacking MPLA and FNLA camps in exchange for Portuguese military and material support at roughly the same time. With the onset of U.S. and South African aid in the mid-1970s, Savimbi became conciliatory toward the West and adopted the rhetoric of free-enterprise capitalism. However, as recently as 1984 he declared UNITA a "socialist movement" in the Portuguese press.

In August 1985, UNITA split as a result of dissatisfaction with Savimbi's leadership. The dissidents accused Savimbi of waging a war of terror against those "who do not obey him unconditionally." Their statement called Savimbi another Idi Amin and claimed that support for UNITA has dropped.

### **What is UNITA's relationship with South Africa?**

UNITA and South Africa maintain a mutually beneficial alliance. South Africa has acknowledged that it provides "material, humanitarian, and moral support" to UNITA. South Africa's invasions of Angola (ostensibly to attack SWAPO bases) are usually designed primarily to assist UNITA—through the establishment of hidden arms caches inside Angola, through advance-guard activities which allow UNITA to "capture" vanquished areas, or through direct reinforcement and defence of UNITA positions under attack by Angolan troops.

UNITA fulfills one of South Africa's primary foreign policy objectives: the destabilization of Angola. UNITA has wrecked Angola's infrastructure by bombing its only oil refinery, by vandalizing its agricultural research station, and by sabotaging the trans-Angolan Benguela railroad. UNITA has also terrorized the Angolan population by kidnapping and murdering civilian technicians, burning and stealing crops on a scale which has produced acute famine, and mining the paths used by villagers to get to their fields.

This ongoing war ensures Pretoria's continued control over Namibia and delays economic reconstruction in Angola, the southern African state least dependent on South Africa, thus frustrating the attempts of the frontline states to alter economic relations in the region. At the same time, UNITA's activities encourage perception of the war as a civil war, obscuring its fundamental nature as a South African war of aggression. South African troops frequently pose as UNITA forces. In the end, distinguishing between UNITA and South African forces is largely an academic exercise for, as Jose Belmundo, a captured 32 Battalion soldier, admitted, "The 32nd and UNITA had different spheres of operation, but we had the same boss - South Africa."

The cosiness of Savimbi's relationship with Pretoria was vividly illustrated in 1984 when Savimbi was the only Black leader to participate in the inauguration of P.W. Botha. Savimbi's ties to the apartheid regime have destroyed UNITA's credibility both within Angola and with other African nations.

### **In spite of UNITA's close ties to Pretoria, isn't Savimbi still our best hope for bringing peace to southern Africa by diminishing Soviet influence in the region?**

No. The greatest threat to regional peace is not Soviet influence but South African expansionist aggression. No Eastern Bloc nation has ever invaded any nation of southern Africa; South Africa has invaded or launched surprise raids into **every one of its neighbor states**. Additionally, it occupies Namibia and maintains surrogate forces in Mozambique (MNR) and Angola (UNITA).

At a time when growing unrest within South Africa is stretching Pretoria's ability to sustain both repression at home and destabilization abroad, President Botha would welcome any actions which would reduce the financial and military burden of apartheid policy. Aid to UNITA would alleviate pressure on Pretoria. Aid to UNITA is aid to South Africa.

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