

THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA

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May 27, 1994

Dear Friends,

Although it is virtually absent from the news, the war in Angola continues. Negotiations to end the war are at a delicate stage. The United Nations will be meeting next week to consider renewal of the mandate for the current very limited UN presence.

The level of willingness of the international community to support an adequate UN presence will be critical in determining whether a lasting agreement is soon finalized, and how it is implemented. The return to war in September 1992 was facilitated by the international community's attempt to do it on the cheap, which made it far easier for Unita to return to war when it decided it did not like the election results.

To repeat the same mistake again would be unforgiveable. But with the competing demands on limited peacekeeping budgets, it is indeed possible that it could happen. In order to prevent that, officials must hear that there is public concern in order to make the case within the U.S. bureaucracy and Congress for providing adequate support.

I am enclosing for your information an action alert prepared by the Washington Office on Africa, and the executive summary of a report prepared after a March visit to Angola by representatives of the Office of Transition Initiatives in AID, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, and the Department of Defense. For copies of the full report, please contact the Office of Transition Initiatives, Bureau of Humanitarian Response, USAID, Washington, DC 20523-0059 (phone: 202-736-7325; fax: 202-647-0218).

It is essential to act now to increase the chances that a settlement, if signed, will be adequately implemented.

Sincerely,

Imani Countess

Imani Countess
Executive Director



ACTION ALERT

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STRONGER SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ANGOLAN PEACE

May 1994

Talks in Lusaka, Zambia on a new peace settlement in Angola are moving into their seventh month. Diplomatic sources say an agreement may be near, and the gap between the parties on the basic issue of how large a share of power to grant election loser Unita has been narrowed. Once that is resolved, the military technicalities of a cease-fire will be addressed. But talks could still stall, and implementation of an agreement will depend on commitment of an adequate United Nations peacekeeping force. To increase the chances of signing and implementing all aspects of a peace accord, it is essential that the international community take a more proactive role now.

In particular, it is urgent that the United States pledge adequate financial support for the 5,000 to 7,000 United Nations troops required to supervise troop demobilization once an agreement is signed. The U.S. is not being asked to commit troops, and Angola has even offered to pay a share of the costs. But a strong U.S. commitment could easily make the difference between success and failure.

In order to increase pressure for finalizing and implementing an agreement, the U.S. should also insist on compliance with the existing United Nations arms and fuel embargo against Unita. Once an agreement is signed, leadership will also be necessary to ensure consistent monitoring, with appropriate pressure against violations by either side. Adequate advance commitment to funding an expanded UN presence, however, is indispensable. In 1992, the lack of such a presence contributed to Angola's return to war. The international community should not make the same mistake again.

BACKGROUND

The war in Angola resumed in late 1992 when Unita leader Jonas Savimbi refused to accept his election defeat by President José Eduardo dos Santos of the incumbent government. The sieges of inland cities by Unita in 1993 produced casualties estimated to exceed 50,000, without counting those dying in the countryside. An estimated 1,000 people a day were dying from war-related causes in 1993; despite somewhat reduced levels of conflict this year, casualties are still high. Even in the capital Luanda, which has not come under direct attack, the swollen population of over two million (one-fifth the country's population) is afflicted by water shortages, cholera and rampant inflation leaving hundreds of thousands on the edge of survival.

Over two million of Angola's eleven million people are dependent on international relief for survival. Fighting still blocks resumption of agriculture or freedom of movement throughout most of the countryside. Cereal production, down by almost one-third in 1993, is projected to decline an additional 20% this year. UN and non-governmental relief supplies are now reaching many sites in the interior, but delivery is precarious, and even food supplies are barely sufficient to avert starvation. Clothes, blankets, medicines are all in short supply.

Angola had only a brief interlude of peace, beginning in May 1991, when the Angolan government and Unita signed a peace agreement providing for demobilization of the two armies and multi-party elections. Implementation was in the hands of a commission of the Angolan signatories, with participation by Portugal, the United States and Russia, and a small UN observer mission.

Elections held in September 1992 produced a high turn-out of over 90% of the electorate. International observers judged the process generally free and fair. The MPLA won 54% of the legislative seats, as compared with 34% for Unita. President dos Santos fell just short of 50% in the presidential race, compared with 40% for Unita leader Savimbi. Savimbi refused to accept the results, choosing instead to return to war. Unita launched a series of offensives around the country in October 1992, benefitting from the fact that it had systematically violated the peace agreement by not demobilizing its troops. It has relied on smuggled diamonds to pay for supplies brought in through Zaire or from South Africa.

The international community was slow to respond. In May 1993, the United States finally recognized the Angolan government, after Unita refused to accept a new internationally endorsed cease-fire agreement. In September 1993, the UN Security Council imposed an oil and fuel embargo on Unita. New peace talks began in Lusaka last November, and have resulted in agreement on procedures for troop demobilization, a second round of presidential elections, and other issues.

The government has offered Unita a number of ministries and provincial governorships. But Unita still wants more power than the government is willing to give. The government fears that Unita will again violate any new agreement, and that the world will fail to react, as happened in 1992.

Immediate concerns are funds for the expanded UN presence, and for demobilization, disarmament and removal of an estimated 8 million land mines. The U.S. is being asked for financial support, not troops, and the Angolan government is ready to pay its share. Without a strong new international commitment now, the peace process may falter even before an agreement is finalized, or collapse from inadequate resources before it is implemented.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write:	Anthony Lake National Security Council Washington, DC 20506 Fax: 202-456-2883	Warren Christopher U.S. State Department Washington, DC 20520 Fax: 202-647-6434
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Say you are concerned at the delay in reaching a new peace settlement in Angola. You appreciate U.S. support of the peace process, but are convinced that it is also urgent that the U.S. make a firm commitment to funding an expanded United Nations mission if an agreement is signed.

Send copies of your message to:

Strobe Talbott Deputy Secretary of State U.S. State Department Washington, DC 20520 Fax: 202-647-6434	Doug Bennet Asst. Secretary of State U.S. State Department Washington, DC 20520 Fax: 202-647-6510	Dick Clark Senior Director for Global Issues, NSC Washington, DC 20506 Fax: 202-395-1199
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Executive Summary

A multi-agency US mission visited Zambia, Angola and Belgium March 1-12 to conduct exploratory consultations on anticipated requirements, after a negotiated settlement to Angola's civil war. Key concerns were the care and feeding of soldiers in quartering areas; the reintegration of ex-combatants; and coping with Angola's land mine inheritance.

Major findings:

Peace appears possible in Angola. The UN-led Lusaka talks have brought the Government and UNITA near to the conclusion of a political reconciliation pact. Though many hurdles to a comprehensive settlement remain, an endpoint may be approaching that pushes the two sides towards eventual peace.

A future accord in Angola will be prone to significant delays which could seriously postpone the entry of UNITA forces into quartering areas and Government forces into barracks. Delays could stem from protracted GRA/UNITA debate over outstanding military issues and slowness by the UN in establishing logistical support for UN observers and peacekeepers.

Full preparatory work on demobilization, reintegration and demining will only become possible after the two sides have settled outstanding military issues. Nonetheless, important preparatory steps can begin now.

During the demobilization and reintegration phases, the UN will be exceedingly strained. Since late 1993, the UN has successfully expanded emergency relief operations which are expected to expand further after a peace accord.

Intensive prior UN planning and coordination is needed for demobilization, centered on the preparation of the quartering areas for UNITA fighters; reintegration programs for ex-combatants; demining; and the return of dislocated populations.

Strong UN mechanisms to negotiate a consensus on programs with the GRA and UNITA and coordinate international assistance need to be in place as early as possible.

The UN will experience a surge of demands to answer the needs of approximately 125,000 UNITA fighters and dependents in quartering areas. Individual camps are likely to be sizeable and require considerable logistical support.

Demands upon the UN will increase dramatically, if the UN is simultaneously called upon to provide humanitarian assistance to barracked FAA troops.

When the reintegration phase begins, the number of UNITA troops involved will be significant but not overwhelming. On the government side, however, the numbers could rise to very high levels, if large numbers quickly leave military service and if large numbers of formerly demobilized soldiers become eligible for reintegration assistance.

The role of NGOs in the demobilization and reintegration process is not clear to most UN agencies and has not yet been raised with NGOs. Yet NGOs will be the UN partners in providing food and health care in the quartering areas. Their training and rehabilitation programs will be integral to the reintegration process. Moreover, the NGOs are perceived by UNITA as relatively neutral institutions and acceptable conduits of assistance. In UNITA territory, NGOs may play the central role in the reintegration process because of UNITA skepticism of government institutions and programs.

A major challenge facing the UN will be managing complex, balanced relations with the GRA and UNITA. Especially difficult will be ensuring the continuous incorporation of UNITA into the demobilization and reintegration process. The two sides' perceived needs, preferences and sensitivities differ significantly. Both sides have inflated expectations of future UN assistance, especially for training. Inevitably, potentially destabilizing conflicts will arise which the UN will be called upon to resolve. The UN should prepare itself now for this eventuality.

The UN's humanitarian coordination unit (UCAH) will play a pivotal role in the implementation of peace accords. It proposes to link with donors, NGOs, UN family members, UNITA and GRA in developing plans, winning donor contributions, and recruiting implementing agencies. The implications of concentrating this amount of planning and programming in a single agency need to be evaluated carefully.

The scale of Angola's mine problem -- the volume of mines, the number of victims, and the urgent need for public awareness programs to minimize future injury -- rivals that of Afghanistan and Cambodia. It presents immediate challenges to implementing any future peace accord: clearing mines from besieged cities and other concentrations which will endanger the anticipated increased movement of dislocated civilian populations; and reopening routes and areas required for the deployment of UNAVEM peacekeepers, the encampment of UNITA forces, and the associated delivery of humanitarian relief. Critical to success will be the rapid organization of logistical support.

Long term mine clearance and public awareness programs, likely stretching over a decade or longer, will be required to eliminate mines as an impediment to reconstruction and minimize future injuries.

Any future mine clearance program, to be effective in the immediate and long term, must answer the serious infrastructural, organizational and data problems that impeded efforts in 1991-1992. That will require a coordinated international approach, in partnership with Angolan interests. Any such effort will benefit considerably from early preparatory work begun prior to the actual signing of a comprehensive settlement.

Recommendations:

That the UN take early action:

- * to encourage the GRA and UNITA to resolve outstanding military issues as soon as possible.
- * to encourage the GRA and UNITA to enforce an effective cessation of fighting after the initialling of a reconciliation pact that might allow for the early deployment of UN observers.
- * to ensure that adequate logistical support is in place for the timely deployment of UN observers and peacekeepers.
- * to include in UNAVEM III's assessed budget adequate funding for the Central Mine Action Unit, humanitarian assistance to quartering areas, and seed funding for reintegration.
- * to create an integrated UN management structure in Angola, under SRSG Beye, that coordinates UNAVEM and UCAH's involvement in demobilization and reintegration and concentrates decision-making authority in Angola.
- * to design and plan, under UCAH's active leadership, assistance to the quartering areas and reintegration programs that rest on adequate prior surveys, an expanded rapport with GRA and UNITA counterparts, and the expanded engagement of NGOs and donors.
- * to strengthen UNDP's role in future reintegration activities, and to create effective UNDP trust fund mechanisms.
- * to clarify UN institutional arrangements for launching a Central Mine Action Unit, and to launch a national mine awareness program as soon as possible.
- * to encourage NGOs to establish a unified forum to represent NGO interests in UN-NGO collaborations.

Regarding the USG:

- * that USAID assist UCAH in building a capacity in demobilization

and reintegration, by underwriting 6 experts for up to 6 months in the pre-accord period, and providing additional short term technical and material support over the next year.

* that DOD assist the Central Mine Action Center: through technical experts in mine awareness and surveys, contingent upon a DOD decision that security conditions permit assistance, in the pre-accord period; and through a survey team and other technical and material assistance DOD determines are appropriate, following a comprehensive settlement.

* that OTI soon organize a second mission to Angola to further develop USAID and DOD early forms of assistance, in anticipation of an accord.

Sample Letter

Dear ___:

I am writing to strongly encourage you to support adequate funding for an expanded United Nations peacekeeping force to implement a new peace agreement in Angola. Whether the agreement is properly implemented, and indeed whether it avoids being stalled on the last details to be negotiated, depends on active, public and timely international support.

In particular, it is urgent that the United States pledge adequate financial support for the 5,000 to 7,000 United Nations troops required to supervise troop demobilization, and for removal of landmines, once an agreement is signed. The U.S. is not being asked to commit troops, and Angola has even offered to pay a share of the costs. But a strong U.S. commitment could easily make the difference between success and failure.

In order to increase pressure for finalizing and implementing an agreement, the U.S. should also insist on compliance with the existing United Nations arms and fuel embargo against Unita. Once an agreement is signed, leadership will also be necessary to ensure consistent monitoring, with appropriate pressure against violations by either side. Adequate advance commitment to funding an expanded UN presence, however, is indispensable.

In 1992, the lack of such a presence contributed to Angola's return to war. The international community should not make the same mistake again.

[add in from background in action alert as wanted]

The United States bears a particular responsibility for promoting peace in Angola since it was in part the United States that built up the military might of the party that returned Angola to war. The U.S. also bears part of the responsibility for the attempt to get peace on the cheap and the international indifference that allowed the previous peace agreement to fail.

Amidst all the competing demands for U.S. support for peacekeeping, I think Angola is definitely one that warrants special attention.

Sincerely,