1. **General Comments**

The release of party candidate lists for the Constituent Assembly (CA) sparked mixed reactions and political controversy throughout this week. Placement on the list is of particular importance as candidates are arranged in descending order; the lower a name appears on the list the less likely it is to be included in the Assembly. Forty-eight seats are needed in the 72 member Assembly to create a two-thirds majority.

Following the DTA's announcement that Mishake Muyongo, rather than DTA president Chief Kuaima Riruako, would head the candidates list, Riruako, a Herero leader, renounced his seat, saying the DTA already has a constitution (drafted for the Constitutional Council of the Transitional Government of National Unity installed by South Africa in 1985 and dissolved in March 1989). Riruako reasoned that his participation in the CA would be "a waste of time and energy" and would make him "look too stupid." In addition, he did not appear pleased to be surpassed by Muyongo, whom he referred to as "a man thrown away by SWAPO." (Muyongo split from SWAPO in 1980.) The Hereros are widely recognized as the DTA's largest body of support. Though Riruako's decision is largely perceived as a face-saving measure, it could significantly affect the election's outcome.

SWAPO's list was also the subject of some controversy. Few local observers were surprised to see President Sam Nujoma heading the candidates list and other prominent SWAPO officials including Hage Geingob, Theo-Ben Gurirab and Libertine Amathila in the top ten. However, concerns were raised over the small number of women on the list, and some observers felt that the whites chosen were unrepresentative, particularly of the business community. All mourned the absence from the list of SWAPO official Anton Lubowski who, had he not been assassinated, was assured an Assembly seat.
2. Overall security

Violence and Intimidation: An uneasy calm continued into its third week after two consecutive weekends of violence by former members of the security forces now incorporated into the DTA. With UNTAG and South West Africa Police (SWAPOL) on heightened alert along the Ondangwa-Oshakati axis, the focus of political violence has shifted to rural northeastern Ovamboland, where residents have experienced a surge of robberies, murders and assaults by both DTA members and fighters of the Angolan rebel movement National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), who continue to operate from Namibian territory in violation of the Tripartite Agreement.

A continuous stream of rumors, most apparently generated by former Koevoet members in the DTA and spread by fearful SWAPO supporters, have kept tensions high. Last weekend there were widespread reports of a planned attack on Oshakati's white township by former Koevoet members dressed as members of SWAPO's guerrilla army, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN). A Sunday Afrikaans paper reported on October 22 that 500 PLAN members were poised to invade Namibia from across the Angolan border. During the coming weekend ex-Koevoet and 101 Battalion members are supposed to mount a major attack on Oshakati. This rumor was strengthened by reports of army-issue flares being fired over Oshakati during the night of October 26.

These reports have so far proved baseless. Both the UN and the Administrator General (AG), for example, found little evidence to support allegations of a PLAN invasion; UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said it was "inconsistent with all the information the UN has concerning the north." Nonetheless, such rumors are widely believed by local people and have contributed significantly to the creation of a climate of instability and fear. UNTAG's perceived inability to prevent the DTA rampages in early October, or even protect their own personnel from attacks, has been particularly demoralizing for area residents.

Koevoet and SWAPOL: The AG continues to argue that Koevoet's demobilization (UNTAG announced this week that 1,191 of 1,205 Koevoets have been properly demobilized) has caused an unstable security situation in the north which necessitates additional police. He received assurances from the South African State President on October 23 that "South Africa still bears responsibility for the maintenance of law and order....the AG will, should unforeseen circumstances develop, have access to the necessary manpower and means to maintain stability and order during the period." In the meantime, however, acting Police Commissioner Foche announced a 2,000-strong police recruitment drive to which any Namibian is welcome to apply, including just demobilized Koevoet members. He noted that the extra police were needed to maintain law and order "at this particularly sensitive time." UNTAG reportedly had no notification of this action. The UN's own police monitors now number 1,473, with 25 additional monitors scheduled to arrive from Singapore on Tuesday.
In addition to recruiting more police, SWAPOL has reportedly initiated a territory-wide effort to arm civilians, (who the AG says are actually police reservists) allegedly as a means towards enhancing local security during the elections. UNTAG has expressed considerable unease over this development, which raises particular concern because 1,035 of UNTAG's 1,500 police will be inextricably involved in balloting procedures and will be severely limited in their ability to monitor police activities unrelated to the polls.

South African Defence Force (SADF) Activity: While an October 23 verification visit indicates that the two Bushmen battalions (see This Week October 15-22) have been formerly demobilized, concerns persist regarding SADF activity in northeastern Ovamboland near the border of Kavango. Hearings before the O'Linn Commission on Intimidation and Election Malpractices indicate that former soldiers, including bushmen, were armed and working in a "no-go" area under the control of the Ombili (Peace) Foundation. After early reports, UNTAG visited the area and discovered over 30 G-3 rifles to be used, according to one Ombili staffer, "against lions and communists." A Churches Information and Monitoring Service delegation recently visited Ombili and spoke with its directors who said it was a community development program established on April 1 "to fill the gap left by the SADF's withdrawal from the area." A recent letter to the Special Representative (SR) and AG from residents of the north called on both officials to dissolve the Foundation unless a satisfactory explanation can be given for its activities.

3. Constituent Assembly Proclamation

With just over a week left before the elections for a constituent assembly are scheduled to begin, the final Constituent Assembly proclamation has yet to be issued. A new draft, informally released by the AG to political parties on October 24, indicates that the CA should: a) draw up, adopt and put into force a constitution, b) declare SWA/Namibia an independent state on a date determined by it, and c) establish a government subject to the provisions of the constitution.

The October 24 draft represents significant changes over the initial July 21 draft, most notably in the deletion of the provision granting the AG veto power over the recommendations of the assembly. Despite this and other welcome changes, UNTAG is still locked in negotiation with the AG regarding the final proclamation. In particular, UNTAG appears to disagree with the AG on the following issues, among others:

- the inclusion into the Constituent Assembly of the 1982 Constitutional Principles, though UNTAG has reportedly agreed to including the requirement for a two-thirds majority to adopt the constitution;

- the procedures for installing the Assembly's president, who UNTAG argues should not be an appointee of the AG, but should temporarily be a member of the largest party until a prompt election by the Assembly is held;
the procedure for adopting the constitution and declaring
independence, which UNTAG contends should be spelled out by the
Assembly itself, not by the Proclamation (with due consideration
given to the binding nature of the settlement).

- the definition of the territory, which the UN argues should be
left as "South West Africa," rather than making specific refer­
ence to the "mandated" territory, which would explicitly exclude
Walvis Bay from the definition.

The National Party of Namibia (NP) has rejected the revised draft,
arguing that it is "wishful thinking" to rely on the international
community to enforce the '82 principles. NP leader Kosie Pretorius
argues that South Africa, not the Constituent Assembly, bears ultimate
responsibility for granting independence to Namibia and that the AG (as
South Africa's representative) should be empowered by the proclamation
to enforce the agreed upon principles. Following the adoption of the
constitution, the South African parliament would then decide on Nami­
bia's independence. Taking a somewhat different view, Organization of
African Unity (OAU) Secretary General Dr. Salim Achmed Salim approves
the "sound principles," suggests they be given "serious consideration,"
but does not see it as his role "to tell the Constituent Assembly what
to do."

Both the AG and Mr. Pretorius conceive of a broader role for the South
African authorities in the constitutional and independence processes
than that envisioned in 435. The AG has even gone so far as to suggest
that decisions of the Constituent Assembly should be subject to judicial
review by the Supreme Court, which is itself supposed to be created by
the Assembly. According to AG officials, negotiations over the proclam­
ation could extend into the week of voting.

4. The Elections

Physical arrangements: The number of official registered voters in
the coming elections, scheduled for November 7-11, 1989, is 701,483.
The figures have been broken down into 23 electoral districts, of which
Ovamboland and Windhoek are the largest. The number of eligible voters
in Ovamboland is 248,272, and another 105,382 in Windhoek.

Alarmingly, less than two weeks before the elections, the number and
location of polling stations in Ovamboland, by far the largest electoral
district in the territory, have yet to be finalized. On October 25,
UNTAG election head Hisham Omayad and administrative head Cedric
Thornberry met local UNTAG election officials in Oshakati for what
became an all-night debate over the number of polling stations and
personnel needed to process Ovamboland's 240,000-plus voters during the
five-day election period. Local UNTAG officials are pushing for
additional personnel and polling sites, arguing that the present number
of mobile and permanent stations are inadequate for the task. A final
decision is still pending.

In the absence of such changes, processing of voters in Ovamboland
could prove difficult and, reportedly, no contingency plan to address
such a problem has been prepared. The only possible option is an extension in the number of polling days which, while potentially conducive to unrest, may prove inevitable. Reportedly, the AG and UNTAG have already privately agreed on a minimum one-day extension. They will not announce such a decision, however, until the early days of balloting indicate a need for additional time.

Concern about possible delay (which adversely affects each station's capacity to process the requisite number of voters and which can prove disastrous for mobile unit schedules) has also been raised in relation to procedures for processing illiterate voters. According to the final law, illiterate voters will be briefed by an AG electoral official in UNTAG's presence and will then proceed into the ballot box alone. This could take an inordinate amount of time, especially if even after instruction the illiterate voter still finds difficulty in marking the ballot. Handicapped and disabled voters on the other hand, will be accompanied into the booth by the person of their choice.

Voter Education: Meanwhile, both UNTAG and SWAPO have launched intensive voter education drives as the electoral campaign enters its final weeks. Field workers in subdistrict offices throughout Ovamboland, for example, have fanned out to teach villagers about the voting procedure and how to mark their ballots. In some areas, such as Ruacana on October 29, SWAPO has conducted full dress mock elections. SWAPO's effort has been buttressed by UNTAG subdistrict heads and staff, who have maintained a heavy speaking schedule at schools and churches in Ovamboland to explain the complex ballot and voting procedures.

However, the long delay in finalizing the election law has sharply limited the amount of time available for voter education - particularly in the north, where transport facilities and communications are difficult and the large population is spread over a vast area. And results from some preliminary tests indicate that many voters do not understand how to mark their ballots properly.

5. South West Breweries Boycott

The Namibian Food and Allied Workers Union (NAFAU) reiterated its call for a national boycott of South West Breweries this week until workers fired during a recent strike are reinstated. The union stated it would prefer to dialogue with the company, but in the absence of any acceptable resolution, they have stepped up the boycott. In response, South West Breweries has brought an application before the Supreme Court seeking an interdict to prevent NAFAU from instigating or participating in or publicizing the boycott. The application is scheduled to be heard this coming Thursday.

For more information contact:
Gay McDougall
Lorraine Eide
(202) 371-1212