Fast Workshop
Conflict Dynamics In Southern Africa:
Early Warning In Practice

Friday, May 12, 2000 Berne, Switzerland

Hussein Solomon

Angola

A Case Study of Aggression, Avarice and Anguish

Draft Version: Not for Citation or Quotation

© Swiss Peace Foundation · Institute for Conflict Resolution and SDC ·
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Dr Hussein Solomon is Research Manager at the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). The views represented in this article are those of the author and should not be seen to reflect those of ACCORD.

Hussein Solomon  
ACCORD  
Private Bag XO18  
Umhlanga Rocks  
4320  
South Africa  
Tel: ++27 31 502 39 08  
Fax: ++27 31 502 41 60  
e-mail: hussein@yebo.co.za
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABBREVIATIONS**

Preface

1 Executive Summary 1
2 Policy Recommendations 3
3 Domestic Risk Assessment 6
3.1 The Background to the Current Angolan Crisis 6
3.2 The Military Balance-of-Power 9
3.3 Social Dynamics 14
3.4 The Political Context 17
3.5 Environmental Aspects 21
3.6 Economic Dimensions 23
3.7 Local Actors 25
3.8 External Actors 27
4 International Risk Assessment 34

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** 39

**ANNEX** 44

Key dates in Angola’s recent history 44

Interview with Jonas Savimbi 45
ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA  Action for Rural Development and the Environment
CADA  Companhia Angolana de Distribuicao Alimentar
DRC   Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAA   Angolan Armed Forces
FLEC  Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda
FNLA  National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FONGA Forum of Angolan Non-Governmental Organisations
GARP  Angolan Group of Reflection for Peace
IMF   International Monetary Fund
INGO  International Non-Governmental Organisation
JMPLA Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola – Youth League
MNC   Multinational Corporation
MPLA  Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NDF   Namibian Defence Force
NGO   Nongovernmental Organization
OMA   Organisation of Angolan Women
PDP   Progressive Democratic Party
RCD   Congolese Rally for Democracy
SADC  Southern African Development Community
SAM   Surface-to-air missile
UN    United Nations
UNAVEM United Nations Verification Mission in Angola
UNITA National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola
UNTA  National Union of Angolan Workers
USAID United States Agency for International Development
USIP  United States Institute for Peace
Preface

The present paper is part of a series of case studies on Southern Africa presented and discussed at the workshop "Conflict Dynamics in Southern Africa - Early Warning in Practice" in May 2000 in Berne, Switzerland. The workshop was organised by the Swiss Peace Foundation's early warning project group FAST (Early Recognition of Tension and Fact Finding) and brought together a great number of scholars, local experts, government officials and representatives of NGO's dealing with the Southern African region. Providing an in-depth analysis of the current situation in Southern Africa, the case studies on South Africa (Johan L. Olivier), Angola (Hussein Solomon), Mozambique (Joseph Hanlon) and Madagascar (Solofo Randrianja) shed light on the various political, socio-economic, demographic, and ecological causes and dimensions of ongoing or potential conflicts in the region.

FAST's main objective is the early recognition of impending or potential crisis situations for the purpose of early action towards the prevention of armed conflict. Combined with a collection of statistic evidence and systematic monitoring of conflictive and cooperative events, the present Country Risk Profile is part of FAST's early warning methodology linking early warning with early action by relevant decision makers. FAST is mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

---

1 Executive Summary*

Angola has been at war for almost forty years with hundreds of thousands dead and millions of others maimed, displaced or otherwise affected by the war. This study provides a brief historical background to the war as well as an assessment of the reasons for failure of previous peace accords and what lessons can be derived from it. Various root causes of the current conflict are identified: ethnicity, material greed, personal egos, and a winner-takes-all political system that encourages violence.

Various external actors are identified such as oil companies and the plethora of private security companies which could serve to escalate the armed conflict. At the same time, it is argued, that the United Nations which seeks to encourage a political settlement in this war-wracked country may, by imposing sanctions on UNITA, have served to further fuel the flames of conflict. At the same time, the study notes that the role of various local and international non-governmental organisations may serve to dampen the conflict dynamics in the country.

The study is divided into two parts. The first part relating to the domestic risk assessment examines the unfolding conflict along the lines of five variables: military balance of power, social dynamics, political context, environmental aspects, and economic dimensions. The role of local and external actors impacting on these dynamics is then assessed. The second part of the study deals with the international risk assessment and stresses that given the spill-over effects of the Angolan conflict, there is a real danger that as the conflicts drag on in the various Central and Southern African countries the conflict dynamics in each country could become increasingly interlocked – forming a single conflict system.

Despite the protracted nature of the Angolan conflict, the study notes that there is room for optimism in ending the conflict if local, regional and international actors can act in unison and

* The views expressed in this study are those of the author and not necessarily those of FAST and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).
where track 1 initiatives by governments and multilateral organisations are complemented by track 2 initiatives by civil society. However, it also makes clear that such intervention needs to be seen in a long-term perspective and therefore needs to be sustainable. The reason for this relates to the deep roots of the conflict as well as the fact that the war has generated its own conflict dynamics that makes long-term post-conflict reconstruction imperative.
2 Policy Recommendations

Firstly, the current Troika (Russia, Portugal and the United States) that is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Lusaka Protocols needs to be expanded to include other players such as the European Union, the Southern African Development Community and Cuba. One of the immediate tasks of such a group according to John Prendergast would be to “… examine ways to guarantee any future agreement against major infractions by signatories, a key failing of those charged with overseeing the deeply flawed implementation of the Lusaka Protocol”.

One of the immediate tasks any intervention faced with is how to get the two sides talking when senior MPLA officials have indicated that they are willing to listen to what UNITA has to say – without Savimbi. One way in which this problem can be circumvented and which can also provide both parties with a face-saving way out of their previous commitment of not talking to each other is for secret talks to start between Dos Santos’ and Savimbi’s deputies in a neutral third country. Whilst this dialogue takes place between the political leadership of the two parties, a parallel dialogue should take place separately between the military leadership of UNITA and FAA.

The latter discussion should revolve around the general security situation in Angola, the logistics of a possible cease arrangement, the demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, the future requirement of a united national Angolan defence force and ways in which to reduce the number of weapons in the country. The former discussion should be focused on the minimal requirements by both parties for peace negotiations between the two main protagonists to formally

---

2 In March 2000, Cuba’s Foreign Minister Felip Perez Roque noted that the path of dialogue is the only way the Angolan conflict will be resolved (“Cuba drums up African support for G77 Summit”, Reuters News Service, 15 March 2000).
4 Ibid., p. 9.
begin in the country and for a cease-fire to take effect. It is also hoped that this is simply the first step towards more inclusive political negotiations over the country’s future that would include such actors as FLEC and the PDP. The short-term aim of such inclusive political discussions would be to create an Interim Political Authority which would be as broadly representative as possible of all political formations within the country and which would govern the country during a four year period when new elections will be held. It is also proposed that it is the purpose of this political authority to oversee local elections in the run-up to national elections at the end of the four-year period. The rationale for starting with local elections is that this, “… could slowly help develop a democratic culture, as lower-level contests could delay the high stakes/high-risk national competition until more investment in the process is created”\(^5\). It is also hoped that such face-to-face discussions and institutions such as an Interim Political Authority would build the trust of all the parties concerned.

Of course, peace is no easy process and it is imperative that the international community does all in its power in the form of both carrot (incentives) and stick (punitive measures) to ensure that parties stay at the negotiating table and also that they comply with agreements reached. Punitive sanctions can include effective and targeted sanctions on both the MPLA and UNITA. The MPLA remains highly dependent on revenues generated from oil and the international community can exploit this vulnerability. Though this may not be very palatable; the reality is that given the huge profits generated by war, certain economic incentives need to be created for both MPLA and UNITA officials to stay within the peace process. At the same time sufficient funds needs to be made available to the UN so that it can play an effective role in any Angolan peace process from the monitoring of cease-fire arrangements to post-conflict reconstruction. In parallel, the international community would need to encourage and assist track two initiatives on the part of Angolan civil society in partnership with International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs). For those who raise the question of costs in relation to donor fatigue, it should be borne in mind that the world threw an estimated US $25 billion worth of

\(^5\) Ibid., p. 12.
bombs on a small corner of south-eastern Europe last year within three months. From a moral perspective, why could not a fraction of this amount find its way into a vast corner of south-western Africa? Are Angolan lives cheaper than those of Kosovars?

Of course a great many other issues need to be addressed in the medium-to-long-term:

- Encouraging a culture of human rights and respect for the rule of law. This can be done at various levels from ensuring media freedom to training members of the security forces of their responsibilities to citizens
- Bridging the ethnic, class, urban divides at social, economic and political levels
- Demining needs to continue so as to open up fertile land for farming as well as teaching farmers the use of fertilisers and crop rotation so these could be economically sustainable so that 200 Angolans do not need to starve to death every day
- Fostering trust and reconciliation within and between communities by using churches and NGOs whose membership cuts across the divides
- Training a corps of mediators to impart mediation and dispute resolution skills to local community leaders as a component of a more holistic peace process
- Demilitarizing Angolan politics – no political party should have an armed wing
- Building institutional capacity to meet the needs of ordinary people. In this way, good governance can itself be a conflict resolution mechanism
- Closely related to this is a radical restructuring of the political system of Angola with emphasis on decentralisation and power-sharing so that all feel part and no section of the populace feels alienated from the political system
- A concomitant of the latter point is that members of political parties need to be trained in the art of politics so that the politics of the ballot is seen to be superior to the politics of the bullet
- Radical restructuring of the economic system of Angola also needs to take place so that all feel that they are benefiting from the country’s resources
3 Domestic Risk Assessment

3.1 The Background to the Current Angolan Crisis

For almost forty years, Angola has been in a state of almost continuous war. In 1961, a bloody-armed struggle from Portuguese colonial rule began. By November 1975, independence was granted. Even before the former colonial power had withdrawn from its erstwhile colony, however, war broke out among the various politico-military formations of Angola: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA)\(^6\). According to a United States Institute for Peace (USIP) report\(^7\) during 1975, more than 50,000 people died in the fighting and 300,000 Portuguese fled Angola taking much needed skills. In addition tens of thousands Angolan refugees fled into neighbouring Namibia and Zambia.

Angola’s political situation was further complicated during the Cold War, when all world affairs was seen through the lens of the titanic struggle between the capitalist US and the communist Soviet Union. Thus the internationalisation of the Angolan conflict witnessed the Marxist MPLA of President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos receiving assistance from Moscow and Havana whilst Jonas Savimbi’s formerly Maoist UNITA which was now portrayed as pro-Western received support from the United States and South Africa\(^8\).

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the subsequent ending of the Cold War have released the world

---

\(^6\) Holden Roberto’s FNLA was largely destroyed in the ensuing war. At the political level, too, support was switched by regional backers such as President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire from the FNLA to UNITA. Remnants of the FNLA soon found a new political home in UNITA.


from the constraints of global bipolarity and world politics seems to be following a more turbulent trajectory. In Angola, it has meant that both parties now embrace the free enterprise system, but this has resulted in more obstacles than opportunities for peace. Thus according to Paul Salopek\textsuperscript{9}: “The West now backs former leftist Dos Santos, whose newly found enthusiasm for free markets has earned him a reputation as one of the most corrupt presidents in Africa”. This will be discussed later in the study.

There have, of course, been efforts on the part of the international community to end this war. First, there was the 1988 New York Agreement which laid the basis for the withdrawal of foreign armies especially the Cubans and South Africans from Angolan soil. In terms of the agreement a United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM I) was to monitor the withdrawal of all foreign armies\textsuperscript{10}.

The second initiative came from the former Zairian leader Mobutu Sese Seko who assembled 18 African leaders in his country on 22\textsuperscript{nd} June 1989. Out of that meeting, a document was issued which called for the implementation of a cease-fire on the 24\textsuperscript{th} June (just two days after the meeting) and a committee to monitor the process. According to Senzo Ngubane\textsuperscript{11}, quoting William Zartman, this attempt however proved to be futile because of the manner in which it was handled. Mobutu, who was serving as a facilitator, adopted a strategy that misled both parties and ended up harming the entire process. Mobutu wrongly informed the ruling MPLA that UNITA has, inter alia, agreed to recognise the Angolan constitution and to be part of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and also to send its leader into temporary exile. UNITA was then informed that the MPLA has welcomed its conditions. However, both parties denied these statements after discovering that the negotiator had misrepresented each other’s stands.

\textsuperscript{9} Paul Salopek, “CEOs of War Bleed Angola,” Chicago Tribune, 2 April 2000.
Subsequently, diplomatic initiatives under the United Nations (UN) and the Troika led to the signing of the Bicesse Accords on 31st May 1991. The Troika comprised of Portugal, Russia and the United States. Following the signing of the accords the three countries became Observer States in the peace process. Subsequently, the second United Nations Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM) was announced to assist in the country’s peace process.

The Bicesse Accords called for constitutional amendments, demobilisation and re-integration of armed combatants, and presidential and parliamentary elections in Angola which were held as scheduled on 29th-30th September 1992. The results of the presidential election was that incumbent President Dos Santos won 49.6 percent of the vote to Savimbi’s 40.7 percent and the MPLA won 54 percent of the vote in the legislative elections to UNITA’s 34 percent. Savimbi then rejected the results of this election and launched military attacks. This provoked a fierce government response. Thus between 1992 and 1994 300,000 Angolans, about 3 percent of Angola’s population, perished in the fighting.

Following the collapse of the Bicesse Accords, the UN Special Envoy launched a fresh round of talks between the government and UNITA as well as a series of meetings with various Southern African Heads of State. What arose from this was the Lusaka Protocol signed on 20 November 1994. This provided for a cease-fire, the integration of the two armies, and a government of national unity at central and provincial levels. In terms of the Protocol, UNITA leaders were promised private residences, political offices in each province and a central headquarters in Luanda. UNITA was also entitled to some ministerial and deputy ministerial portfolios; provincial and deputy provincial governors. The Lusaka Protocol also saw the re-

---

12 Ibid., p. 6.
establishment of the third UN Mission with a more or less similar mandate.

However, the Lusaka Protocol was soon to meet the same fate as all the previous peace accords – largely since trust was lacking on the part of both parties. UNITA’s failure to disarm and Savimbi’s refusal to leave UNITA’s headquarters in Bailundo for the capital Luanda was illustrative of this lack of trust. The Lusaka Protocol broke down completely in 1998 when government forces attacked rebel strongholds15.

As the world watches this unfolding African tragedy, the Angolan civil war has since 1975 witnessed the killings of more than 500,000 people, the mass displacement of hundreds of thousands more, and the impoverishment of an entire nation.

3.2 The Military Balance-of-Power

The military balance of power has often seesawed between UNITA and the MPLA since 1998 and military observers see no outright military victory on the part of one party over another. Between February 1998 and April 1999, UNITA transformed itself from a guerrilla movement into a conventional armed force. Two reasons account for this. The first reason relates to UNITA’s acquisition of sophisticated conventional systems such as 6 Russian MI-25 combat helicopters; 6 MiG-23 aircraft, 50 tanks, 75 armoured troop carriers, major mobile artillery and hand-cam ed satellite telephones. The second reason relates to UNITA forces receiving assistance in ‘training and logistics’ from South African and Ukrainian mercenaries who also operate the new equipment on behalf of UNITA. The money for weapons purchases emanates from the illicit diamond trade. Since 1992, UNITA has earned between US $2.5 and $4 billion from sales of rough diamonds from mines under its control.

The acquisition of its new weapon systems gave UNITA a tremendous degree of strategic and tactical manoeuvrability. The acquisition of combat helicopters and fighter aircraft allowed UNITA to challenge the air superiority of Angolan Armed Forces

15 Jensen, op.cit.
(FAA) for the first time as well as to provide support for its infantry, air cover for its artillery and air reconnaissance to plan its next offensive.

UNITA’s tanks, armoured troop carriers and major mobile artillery allows it greater flexibility that adversely affects the FAA’s ability to predict the next UNITA offensive. Similarly, in addition to their contribution to mobility and flexibility, the use of Iridium satellite telephone enhanced the simultaneous command and control of different theatres of conflict by UNITA’s leader, Jonas Savimbi.

During 1999, the military superiority of UNITA was seen at various levels. UNITA besieged and shelled the towns of Malanje, 400 kilometres east of Luanda, and Kuito, 600 kilometres to the southeast. UNITA also conducted hit-and-run attacks on roads in most areas of the country in an eclectic display of its conventional and unconventional warfare capabilities. In addition, UNITA also resumed mine laying and the destruction of bridges of the northern Uige Province as well as capturing the northern Uige town of Maquela do Zondo, situated on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) border.

The latter half of 1999 however witnessed a change in the military balance of power in favour of FAA. The MPLA, for instance, engaged in a massive arms buying spree equipping FAA with the most sophisticated equipment it could purchase – including a number of T-72 tanks. The proceeds of oil sales funded these purchases. But, it was in September, 1999 when Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos launched Operation Restoration that the military balance altered radically in favour of FAA. This operation aimed to eliminate UNITA’s war-making capability. Russia and Portugal as well as neighbouring states such as Namibia and Zimbabwe supported this military offensive. Luanda’s military offensive seemed to be paying dividends when FAA captured one of UNITA’s strongholds – Bailundo. This was followed by the fall of Andulo to FAA as UNITA retreated. Shortly thereafter, in November 1999, another headquarter of UNITA –

---

17 Ibid., pp. 26-27.
Lumbala N'guimbo came under MPLA control following heavy fighting. By the 3rd November FAA announced it had taken 13 out of 16 municipalities in the northwestern province of Uige and on 15th November it announced that 80 percent of UNITA’s conventional war capacity had already been destroyed. On 24 December 1999, FAA forces took control of Jamba in the southeast of the country. After heavy fighting, 200 UNITA fighters are reported to have surrendered to FAA forces at Jamba.\(^\text{18}\)

International observers witnessing the retreat of UNITA forces have commented that this is the end of UNITA and some, more optimistically, have noted that the severe military defeats inflicted upon the rebel movement by government forces might well mean the end of a conflict that has raged in the country for decades. Such an observation is, however, misplaced. A more nuanced analysis would suggest that a more cautious approach may be necessary. For instance, it is clear that UNITA’s war-making machinery is still intact. According to Michael Schmidt\(^\text{19}\), even after its recent military reverses UNITA still has between 20,000 and 25,000 armed troops.

One of the positive and saddest features of this FAA military offensive was that it resulted in a UNITA more amenable towards a negotiated settlement. This window of opportunity was, however, not exploited by the international community. For instance, UNITA itself acknowledged on its website “... the success of the government’s offensive over a wide front and the difficulties caused by heavy aerial reconnaissance and bombings”\(^\text{20}\). As early as December 1999, Paris-based members of UNITA called for peace negotiations with the MPLA. It did indicate that it did not simply seek for an end to armed hostilities but a peace that emanates from a dialogue on the profound historical and political causes of the conflict\(^\text{21}\). By 21st January 2000 Alcides Sakala, aide to Jonas Savimbi reiterated the call for

negotiations on the root causes of the war\textsuperscript{22}. Six days later it was the turn of Adalberto Acosta Junior, UNITA’s chief foreign affairs spokesman who called for a negotiated settlement to end Angola’s long-running civil war since he noted that neither side could win an outright military victory. Significantly, Acosta Junior made the statement whilst in Lisbon to attend the launch of a new organisation called the Commission for Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Angola. The purpose of the Commission is to promote dialogue and to seek a peaceful settlement between the parties to the Angolan conflict\textsuperscript{23}. In May, 2000 it was the turn of Savimbi himself who called for dialogue with the MPLA on the fundamental causes of the conflict\textsuperscript{24}.

At the same time, however, both Alcides Sakala and Acosta Junior declared that the rebel movement’s call for negotiation should not be construed as weakness. Indeed, Sakala noted that UNITA has reorganised itself as a military force and has once again placed its emphasis on guerrilla warfare\textsuperscript{25}. Thus UNITA has redeployed its troops to Cuanza Cubango Province to resist the government’s offensive in the southeast, and a major part of UNITA’s conventional capacity has been sent north of the Kwanza River between Mussende and Malanje. As a result of UNITA’s focus on small groups of fighters, the war in Angola has become much more widespread and fighting has now spread to the central highlands around Andulo; Luzamba in the northern province of Lunda Norte; Cuimba in Zaire province on the Congolese border\textsuperscript{26}; northern Uige Province, north and northwestern parts of Malanje in the central highlands; in Cubal in the central parts of the coastal Benguela Province; east of Matala in southern Kuando Kubango Province, eastern Mexico Province; and between Cucumbi and Alto Chicapa in the eastern Lunda Sul Province. Clashes between UNITA and FAA

\textsuperscript{24}The interview appeared in the independent Folha 8 on 5 May 2000 and full text is in the annex.
\textsuperscript{25}Mseteka, op.cit.
\textsuperscript{26}“Angola: UNITA to launch guerrilla campaign,” IRIN Report, 26 January 2000.
forces has also been reported in Cuanza Norte; Cuanza Sul; Bie; Huambo; Huila; and Cunene provinces.

In response to the new UNITA threat, President Dos Santos suspended FAA operations against UNITA to adapt military strategies accordingly. Thus on 27 March 2000, Dos Santos stated: “We are adapting our forces and methods to correspond with the new type of guerilla warfare which is being exercised all over the country.” By 5th April 2000, it was clear that FAA believed that they were ready to begin operations against UNITA again. On this date, Angolan Army Chief-of-Staff, General Joao de Matos moved his headquarters from Catumbela in Benguela Province to the Mexico provincial capital of Luena to direct the new offensive. It would appear as if the new offensive is aimed to capture the UNITA base of Cazombo; close to the Zambian border; and Lumbala N’gimbo further to the south. Both have strategically important runways.

At the time of writing, it may be too early to make a pronouncement on these new moves on the part of FAA, however in the author’s opinion it seems that it is not going to be very effective. On the basis of the weapons and targets being chosen it would appear that FAA is still relying on conventional strategies to deal with a guerilla force, instead of applying counter-insurgency measures. From the perspective of UNITA it is clear what they aim to be doing – this is to stretch FAA forces to the maximum to cover the 1,246,700 square kilometres that is Angola. In doing so, they hope to also stretch FAA command and control capabilities and to harass their supply lines. At the same time, UNITA has a considerable amount of its conventional capabilities in neighbouring states as will be explained below, that I believe they will use to deliver the coup de grace. This seems to be a strategy that seems to be working for UNITA at this time.

---

In this volatile military mix, there is one wild card’ which would also need to be addressed and this is the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC).

The Cabinda enclave, bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo, separated from the rest of Angola by the Congo River, remains another source of tension in this war-wracked country. The area that is home to approximately 100,000 people harbours the bulk of Angola’s oil production. The strategic importance of Cabinda for the government is the fact that roughly 90 percent of the country’s oil exports emanate from the enclave. FLEC was borne from dissatisfaction amongst the people of the enclave regarding the fact that they have not reaped the benefits from any of the oil revenues. FLEC has been at war with the MPLA since the 1970s and has continued to attack and destroy key oil installations and engaged in several skirmishes with government troops. FLEC has been always neglected by the various peace initiatives listed above between UNITA and the MPLA. Given the strategic importance of the enclave, however, it is imperative that they are brought on board in any future peace talks.

3.3 Social Dynamics

Angola’s population of 11,177,537 is divided into various ethnic groups. These are: Ovimbundu – 37 percent; Mbundu/Kimbundu – 25 percent; Bakongo – 13 percent; Mestico (mixed European and African) – 2 percent; European – 1 percent; and the remaining 22 percent is made up of a number of smaller groups. Some commentators have questioned whether this ethnic mix is not one of the driving forces of the conflict between UNITA and the MPLA. Senzo Ngubane for instance notes that UNITA draws its support from the largest ethnic group – the Ovimbundu – as well as the Chokwe; whilst the MPLA draws its support from the Mbundu – the second largest ethnic group – and amongst the Mestico.

---

31 Ngubane, op.cit., p. 4.
32 Central Intelligence Agency, op.cit., p. 2.
33 Ngubane, op.cit., p. 4.
Bram Posthumus, however, is of the opinion that such ethnic considerations have often been exaggerated since both sides have recruited fighters from all major groups in Angola. Posthumus further notes that, “It would, however, be wrong to characterise the two main parties in the war in terms of the ethnic origins of their supporters. Although Savimbi has attempted to portray UNITA as a true ‘African’ movement, he has in the past countered his own anti-white and anti-mestico rhetoric by pointing out that non-Africans are among his highest ranking officials”\(^\text{34}\).

Whilst it is true that both sides have exploited ethnicity (as they had done with ideology during the Cold War) for purposes of mobilisation it would be wrong to negate ethnic differences as a factor in the conflict. As was noted in a USIP report, “Probably the most perplexing and important puzzles is the extent to which the war was fed by and, in turn exacerbated ethnic hostilities”\(^\text{35}\). For instance, it is not clear to what extent FAA forces attack on Bailundo, the home of King Ekuikui, the traditional and spiritual leader of the Ovimbundu has exacerbated ethnic tensions\(^\text{36}\). What is also undeniable is that during the colonial period the Ovimbundu were relegated to the status of plantation labourers and street cleaners. With the coming of independence, the Ovimbundu found themselves once again occupying inferior social positions to the mesticos and Mbundus who live in Angola’s coastal cities\(^\text{37}\). In this way ethnic differences has come to mirror geography and class. This rural-urban, ethnic and class divide would need to be addressed as one of the structural reasons for the ongoing conflict.

Years of war have left deep scars of anger and agony on Angolan society. An estimated 3.7 million people are regarded as war-affected of which 2 million are internally displaced. Hundreds of thousands more are refugees in neighbouring states\(^\text{38}\). But, the suffering of Angola’s people goes much deeper than this. Despite the abundance of natural resources such as oil and petroleum,
subsistence agriculture continues to provide the main livelihood for 85 percent of the population. Not surprisingly, in this situation, the household was viewed as the most important unit of production and often consisted of several generations. The war, however, has disrupted this - forcing people off their lands as well as absorbing many able-bodied adults and adversely affecting food production as seen in the increasing prevalence of malnutrition.

Moreover, given the spiralling levels of poverty and the easy availability of small arms, crime is running rampant inside most communities. In the medium-to-long-term, then, it would suggest the need for extensive post-conflict reconstruction that includes a programme to decrease the number of arms in circulation.

The ubiquitous nature of Angola's war is seen in the militarisation of society itself to serve the rapacious needs of the competing military formations. For instance, the MPLA established early in its reign the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola - Youth Movement (JMPLA). By 1988, it had a membership of 72,000 teenagers and students. After 1977, the JMPLA became the only route to membership of the MPLA. Members of the JMPLA were also required to serve in the Directorate of Peoples' Defence Organisation. But this was not all, the MPLA also organised women into the Organisation of Angolan Women (OMA) which by 1987 had a membership of 1,3 million. Workers, meanwhile, were organised into a state labour union, the National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA) which had a membership of 600,000 in 1988. The militarisation of society means that much more needs to be done during the post-conflict reconstruction phase in terms of fostering inter- and intra-community reconciliation. Given the socialisation of these youth, women and workers it is imperative that a civic education

39 Central Intelligence Agency, op. cit., p. 3.
41 The author could not obtain more recent figures pertaining to membership of this organisation.
42 The author could not obtain more recent figures pertaining to membership of this organisation.
programme be launched in a post-conflict reconstruction phase to undo or limit the damage. This latter point takes on added significance if one considers that, “The war in Angola has raged for nearly forty years, whereas the average Angolan is only seventeen years old. Thus, over 80 percent of the population has never experienced an Angola at peace”\(^{44}\).

Not all things, however, are negative. Several institutions such as the independent trade union movement and the churches have memberships that cut across ethnic and geographic divides and these can be used in any peace initiative to galvanise grassroots support for an unfolding peace process.

3.4 The Political Context

The political system of Angola is extremely closed and repressive with scant respect for human rights. This is seen in a number of ways. For instance, in a recent annual review of human rights, the US Department of State has this to say of the ruling MPLA government: “The government’s human rights record continues to be poor, and it continued to commit numerous serious abuses. Citizens have no effective means to change their government. ... Members of the security forces committed numerous extra-judicial killings, were responsible for disappearances, and tortured, beat, raped and otherwise abused persons....[T]he government took no effective action to prevent security personnel from supplementing incomes through the extortion of the civilian population. ...The judiciary, subject to executive influence, only functions in parts of the country, and does not ensure due process”\(^{45}\).

The same report also noted that UNITA rebels were responsible for killings, disappearances, torture, and rape. In addition, “UNITA military units reportedly pillaged rural areas, depopulated large areas of the country, killed traditional leaders, and eliminated all opposition, real or potential”\(^{46}\).

\(^{44}\) Prendergast, op.cit., p. 3.


\(^{46}\) Ibid.
The contents of this report is supported by other such reports by Amnesty International which recently noted that FAA, in pursuing UNITA forces, routinely detained, tortured and executed civilians suspected of being UNITA supporters. Further evidence of a closed political system is lent by the lack of freedom of the press. January 1995, for instance, witnessed the murder of independent journalist Ricardo de Mello in Luanda and October 1996 witnessed the killing of state television journalist Antonio Casmiro in Cabinda. Both murders remain unresolved. April 2000, meanwhile, witnessed the conviction of independent journalists Rafael Marques and Aguiar dos Santos on charges of slandering President Eduardo dos Santos in articles published last year. A week later it was the turn of journalists Americo Goncalves and Graca Campo who were also convicted on defamation charges against the person of Manuel Pedro Pakavira, the governor of Kwanza Norte Province.

The above facts clearly point out the nature of Angola’s repressive political system with both UNITA and the MPLA responsible for gross human rights abuses. The current position of the international community generally, and more particularly the United Nations, pertaining to their holding up one side – the MPLA – as a victim would need to be rethought. Neither is this helpful in any peace process. A more helpful stance would be to engage with all sides of the divide in order to open up the political space.

International observers viewing the political system of Angola often oversimplify the dynamics in the country and therefore arrive at erroneous conclusions. This is seen at various levels. For instance the MPLA is often seen as a monolithic entity under the tight control of President Dos Santos. However, a closer look would reveal an ailing President Dos Santos at the apex of a party that is deeply divided as to who succeeds him. At this juncture, the party’s Secretary-General Lopo do Nascimento and Roberto de Almeida, the chairman of the National Assembly, are

50 “Angola: Two journalists convicted on defamation charges,” IRIN News Brief, 12 April 2000.
seen as the leading candidates. These developments would need to be factored into any peace process.

The second mistake often made is the assumption that one can divide Jonas Savimbi from UNITA. For instance, British Minister of State for Africa, Mr Peter Hain, called on UNITA to “...get rid of your leader – quickly”\textsuperscript{51}. Clearly, it is not hard to see why such a call has been made. Savimbi is regarded as a warmonger and a “hawk” and with Savimbi out of the political scene, then the assumption is made that one can engage in dialogue with the moderate (“doves”) in UNITA. Such a viewpoint would find support in the fact that several high-ranking UNITA officials – General Jacinto Bandua; Colonel Alcides Lucas Kangunga; Lieutenant-Colonel Jose Antonio Gil; Colonel Aristides Kagunga; and a son of Jonas Savimbi, Araujo Sakaita – have defected from UNITA\textsuperscript{52}.

Such a viewpoint, however, will be erroneous. In the first instance, defections have occurred before within UNITA and have not shaken the rebels’ resolve. It is also interesting that the defectors – past and present – could not stay within the movement and mobilise support against Jonas Savimbi from within UNITA. Secondly, it is also interesting that breakaway groups such as UNITA – Renovada have not been able to attract much support following their distancing themselves from Jonas Savimbi. Thirdly, it under-estimates Savimbi’s control over his movement which according to Michael Schmidt is “vice-like”\textsuperscript{53}. Finally one cannot wish away the 40.7 percent of the popular vote Jonas Savimbi has received in the presidential elections of 1992. Given the fact that Savimbi cannot be wished away strategies have to be developed to deal with him taking on board his concerns and needs.

The third mistake, observers make in their analysis is to concentrate their attention on the MPLA and UNITA whilst ignoring the existence of other political formations in the country. Whilst these are minor players, given the fluidity of the political

\textsuperscript{51} Ngubane, op. cit., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{52} Angola: Report of the Panel of Experts on Violations of Security Council Sanctions against UNITA, op. cit., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{53} Schmidt, op. cit.
context in Angola, they are by no means marginal. One such actor is FLEC mentioned above. But there are other political players that, while having no military wing, are increasingly extending their influence. One of these is the small opposition Progressive Democratic Party (PDP). This party staged two demonstrations in February 2000 against a 1,600 percent fuel price rise. Four of their supporters were arrested whilst at a sit-in on 24th February 2000. What is significant though is that the police subsequently apologised and released them. This suggests that contradictions are now appearing within the political system of patronage and cronyism created by the MPLA. It suggests that, even amongst members of the security services, the message of economic justice is striking home. March and April 2000 saw the PDP forging alliances with other smaller parties with a view to maintaining the momentum and having more marches and sit-ins.

Several opposition parties, meanwhile, opposed President Dos Santos’ call for elections to be held in November 2001. The call for new elections was clearly a move on the MPLA to further marginalise UNITA. However, Alexandre Andre of the Pajoca Party and Bengui Pedro Joao of the Social Democratic Party said it was impossible to have fresh elections whilst the country was still in a state of war. May, 2000 witnessed 17 opposition parties coming together to form a new United Front for Change. This pledged itself to work for the creation of a strong opposition, and an end to the war, and the creation of conditions for holding free and fair elections. A peace initiative could make use of these opposition parties positions to push for a more inclusive peace process – one that includes UNITA.

One of the major problems between UNITA and the MPLA that would need to be addressed in any peace initiative is the lack of trust between the parties. The failure of the Bicesse Accords was clearly a failure on the part of the international community to understand this lack of trust and to take corrective actions. Thus in the run-up to the 1992 elections UNITA kept its

heaviest weapons and 25,000 of its battle-hardened veterans hidden in the bush as opposed to sending them to demobilisation centres. On its part, the MPLA, in a clear breach of the Bicesse Accords, shifted 20,000 of its elite troops into a paramilitary police force. In such conditions it becomes the responsibility of the international community, and in particular that of the Troika, as the final guarantors of the peace. One way in which this could have been handled was to properly resource the UNAVEM II operation so that the belligerents would have confidence in them. Instead the international community erred by under-resourcing the peacekeeping operation with a mere 400 observers. This translated into one observer for every 333 soldiers whereas in Namibia’s transition there was one observer for every six soldiers. This is an important lesson to bear in mind in any future peacekeeping operation.

Other ways to build trust between the parties would be certain constitutional amendments to entrench power-sharing between the various groups at both national and provincial levels. In this way, one would move parties away from ‘zero-sum’ to ‘minimax’ strategies.

3.5 Environmental Aspects

Angola is a vast country, yet only 2 percent of all the land is arable; whilst a further 23 percent has permanent pastures. A further 43 percent is forest or woodlands. As indicated earlier 85 percent of Angolans earn their living from subsistence farming. This is often a precarious existence since the elements have not been kind. Soil erosion and desertification increasingly eats into this tiny 2 percent of arable land.

Despite these natural threats, war constitutes the biggest enemy for the average subsistence farmer. Ten million landmines lay strewn over Angolan soil – often laying in the most fertile of fields. Humanitarian sources note that landmines are being laid

58 Central Intelligence Agency, op. cit., 2.
59 “CEOs of War Bleed Angola,” op. cit.
and that landmine incidents had increased “dramatically”. According to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, between January and November 1999, 409 civilians, mostly women, had fallen victim to landmines on their way to or from wells and farmland. In the meantime, mine clearance activities has been curtailed as the result of the ongoing civil war. This lethal legacy of landmines has resulted in ordinary farmers too afraid to even walk on their fields for fear of serious injury or death. As a result fertile fields lay uncultivated, whilst ordinary Angolans go hungry. According to Colin McClelland, 200 Angolans are dying a day as a result of starvation.

In the short-term it is obvious that two things needed to be done as a matter of urgency. First, food aid needs to get to the most needy of the population and has to be so targeted. This will also ensure that such food aid does not get into the hands of the combatants so as to fuel the war. A concomitant of this is that such food conveys would need to be protected by some sort of security presence. Second, mine clearance would need to continue as a matter of urgency and demining personnel would need to be protected by some sort of security presence.

In the medium-to-long term, after the cessation of hostilities, much can be done to promote reconciliation and reconstruction within communities of UNITA and MPLA supporters by funding joint agricultural initiatives. It is to be hoped that functional cooperation such as this would serve to heal the divisions of the past whilst at the same time contributing to real economic empowerment and development for such villagers.

It is often said, “Even in the darkest cloud, there is a silver lining if one looks hard enough”. For peace researchers, it is imperative that this silver lining is found - even if it is in the strangest of places. One of the natural hazards, Angola faces is local heavy rainfall which causes periodic flooding on the plateau. In February, there were flood alerts in Benguela with

---

61 Ngubane, op. cit., p. 11.
63 Central Intelligence Agency, op. cit., p. 2.
the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) being afraid that more floods will swamp the area\textsuperscript{64}. This period witnessed the government working with local NGOs to see what could be done to minimise the damage. An interesting question that needs to be posed here is if a government, which runs a highly repressive state, can partner with NGOs on the issue of flooding, what about expanding the areas of co-operation into peace?

3.6 Economic Dimensions

When reviewing the economic dimensions of the current situation in Angola, two things stand out - crony capitalism and the commercialisation of war.

Angola is a vast country blessed with such natural resources as: petroleum, diamonds, iron ore, phosphate, copper; gold, bauxite, and uranium\textsuperscript{65}. Angola’s diamonds are among the best in quality and account for a substantial part of the diamond industry and the country is the second largest oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa and is expected to become the largest following recent discoveries of five oil wells, 200 kilometres north-east of Luanda\textsuperscript{66}.

Despite this wealth, the economic lot of ordinary Angolans has not improved but rapidly deteriorated. Angola is among the poorest 15 nations in the world. The country’s people are starving and dependent upon humanitarian aid. Moreover, a third of the children are dying because of disease and hunger before they reach the age of five\textsuperscript{67}. According to the latest Human Development Report\textsuperscript{68} ranking Angola is number 160 out of 173

\textsuperscript{65} Central Intelligence Agency, op.cit., p. 2.
\textsuperscript{67} “CEOs of War Bleed Angola,” op. cit.
\textsuperscript{68} Quoted in Ngubane, op. cit., p. 11.
countries. The cost of servicing the external debt was US $1.6 billion – equivalent to nearly 90 percent of state revenue.

How did this sorry state of affairs come to pass? It would seem to the casual observer that this is simply one of the consequences of war. After all, one could point to how 60 percent of the revenues of Angola’s lucrative oil industry goes towards the country’s defence budget. Such an observer would also note that UNITA has amassed up to US $4 billion over the past eight years in illicit gemstone sales to fund their war machine. Whilst this is obviously part of the answer it is not the complete. A lot of the country’s economic woes relate to the way the MPLA has structured the economic system of political patronage that I refer to as crony capitalism. A recent report by the British NGO, Global Witness, clearly demonstrates how revenues earned from the lucrative oil industry finds its way into the pockets of President Dos Santos and a tiny clique of politicians and businessmen. One example of this was when BP-Amoco, Elf and Exxon paid “bonuses” of US $900 million for drilling licences. However, as much as US $500 million of these “bonuses” went directly to the presidency - bypassing the budget.

Such corruption, of course, translates into economic power and strengthens ties of political patronage developed. This is, of course, anathema, to any talk of a democratic Angolan state. As a result the restructuring of the economy would also need to be taken into account in the post-conflict stage. The incumbent President and his clique, however, would resist this. However, failure to restructure and create a more free economy would only result in not addressing one of the root causes of the current crisis and would simply result in postponing the conflict.

Closely connected to economic corruption is what could only be termed the commercialisation of war. One such example is the British Virgin Islands-registered Companhia Angolana de Distribuição Alimentar (CADA) which was awarded a US $720 million contract to supply food to the armed forces. However, as much as US $500 million of these “bonuses” went directly to the presidency - bypassing the budget.

69 “Angola to pay civil servants and some debts,” Reuters News Service, 10 February 2000.
70 Ngubane, op.cit., p. 3.
71 “CEOs of War Bleed Angola,” op. cit.
million contract to feed Angolan soldiers. CADA is allegedly owned by FAA generals\(^73\).

This situation is not without its contradictions. Thus Adonia Ayebare\(^74\) notes the example of a company called Simportex run by Angolan army General Pedro Benga Lima Fogueuetao and some of his colleagues which provides food and uniforms to the army. Thus Ayebare notes, “Apparently the general and his friends in the army, after being used to earn money from the institution they work for are against any form of business competition. The coming of J. Countinho e Santos Ltd. (JCSL) a Portuguese company on the scene supported by Kundi Paihama, the Minister for Defence, has angered the generals. As business goes in this part of the world, the Angolan Minister for Defence has fronted for JCSL due to the fact that his good friend Gloria Silva, a Portuguese woman runs the company”.

Despite the contradictions between members of the elite, the truth is that these groups of individuals have a vested interest in the continuation of war since their profits would evaporate in peacetime. As such, they could serve as a major obstacle to any plan for a negotiated settlement.

3.7 Local Actors

The last two years has witnessed greater involvement of local actors in the search for peace in strife-torn Angola. One of these actors is the church. March 2000, for instance witnessed Angola’s Roman Catholic Bishops appealing to the United Nations to promote peace talks between the MPLA and UNITA. In a passionate appeal, the bishops called on the UN to review its current policy in Angola and to play a more efficient role. Furthermore they stated, “Closing the doors to dialogue would be opening them to a war with no end in sight”\(^75\). Other church leaders have also called on the two sides to seek a negotiated settlement. For example, in April 2000, the Angolan Episcopal

\(^{73}\) Ibid.


Angola: A Case Study of Aggression, Avarice and Anguish

Church, the Protestant Council of Christian Churches and the Angolan Evangelical Alliance said in a joint statement that they were ready to mediate between the MPLA and UNITA. A 12-member panel of church officials was subsequently set up to pursue “possible avenues for peace”76. Meanwhile the Angolan Lutheran Church organised a meeting between UNITA and MPLA women to meet and bring about reconciliation77.

One of the most positive developments in recent months, and for the first time in Angolan history, has been the fact that all of Angola’s churches have formed a joint body in May 2000 to campaign for peace and national reconciliation. This can be a powerful force for peace in war-ravaged Angola since, combined, “…Angolan churches have a larger support base than any other organisation in the country”78.

Of course, the churches are not the only actors concerned with peace. As early as March 1997, the Forum of Angolan Non-Governmental Organisations (FONGA) in co-operation with the American Friends Service Committee held a training workshop aimed at community workers representing thirty NGOs from Lubango, Huilla, Kwanza Sul, and Luanda itself. The workshop aimed at non-violent means of conflict resolution at community level. FONGA remains one of the few NGOs that maintains a presence across the UNITA-MPLA divide79.

Another local NGO is the Action for Rural Development and the Environment (ADRA). Operating since 1990, ADRA aims to organise “…local communities around development projects, while at the same time raising their political awareness and self-reliance”80. Yet another NGO, the Angolan Group of Reflection for Peace (GARP) was established in April 1999 as a civil society peace advocacy organisation81.

77 “NGOs and the Peace Process in Angola,” op. cit., p. 5.
79 Posthumus, op.cit., p. 402.
80 Ibid., p. 402.
While the possibility of successful track-two diplomacy on the part of Angolan NGOs remains a possibility, it is also true that many problems plague such a possibility. Three reasons account for this. Firstly, within the Angolan political context, there has always been suspicion regarding the neutrality of such NGOs. For instance, ADRA is unacceptable to UNITA because of its close ties to the Luanda government. Secondly, Angolan NGOs are weak and do not have the necessary material and human resources to sustain a long-term conflict intervention. This is further complicated by the fact that many of these actors suffer from severe internal divisions. For instance, the Catholic Church’s hierarchy is known to be divided along political lines. Finally, these actors often compete with one another, engaging in useless (and expensive) competition, while working at cross-purposes. In July 1999, for instance, unionists and intellectuals launched a `peace manifesto’. The Catholic Church meanwhile did not back the manifesto and set up their own independent `movement for peace’.

What is clear is that there is a great need for co-ordination between these NGOs. In addition, dynamic partnerships between local and international NGOs need to be established to increase co-ordination and also to result in the transfer of skills from international to local NGOs.

3.8 External Actors

The fact that the Angolan crisis has been internationalised is seen by the plethora of external actors exerting their influence in a myriad ways. Not all this influence is positive.

One such external actor is the burgeoning private security industry in Angola that can be extremely influential. Both UNITA and the MPLA use such private security companies. In Angola,

83 Solomon, op.cit., p. 28.
84 “NGOs and the Peace Process in Angola,” op.cit., p. 4.
85 The Manifesto notes that there is no military solution to the current crisis and calls for immediate dialogue between UNITA and the MPLA.
86 Solomon, op.cit., p. 28.
they are involved in specialised training to the combatants, VIP protection; mine-lifting and training; intelligence and counter-intelligence; rapid reaction services (hot extraction; casualty evacuation and medical emergency services); arm procurement; transport and protection of personnel and cargo; protection for diamond mines and oil fields. Some of the private security companies known to be operating in Angola are: Saracen International; Sterling; Mat Tech International; Santex; Gray Security Limited; Ibis Air; Alpha Bravo Associates; Alpha 5; Tele Service Sociedade de Telecommunicationes Seguranca e Services (Teleservice); Mamboji; Gurkha Security Guards; Special Gurkha Services Limited; Military Professional Resources Incorporated; Vinell Corporation; Betac Corporation, DynCorp, Ronco and Science Applications International Corporation; AirScan; International Defence and Security (IDAS) Limited; International Security Consultants; and Eurisc Limited.

These private security companies are the wild cards in the Angolan peace process. They can, as the case of Executive Outcomes in Angola between 1993-1995 revealed, radically alter the military balance of power. As indicated earlier, it is clear that no side can currently claim an outright military victory over the other. This could result in the parties being more amenable to negotiate. The presence of private security companies can change this balance and result in the prospects of a negotiated settlement being adversely affected. Some private security companies may also have a vested economic interest in the perpetuation of the war. This relates to the fact that some private security companies have been paid with lucrative oil and diamond concessions that could result in their interest in maintaining the status quo.

In the short-term something obviously needs to be done to make these actors more accountable to the international community and where their energies can be used towards furthering the peace process. In the medium-to-long term, measures need to be put into place that would result in their

disappearance from the Angolan socio-political and economic landscape.

Another set of external actors is international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) which have been trying to positively impact on the twin processes of peace and development in Angola. For example, Norwegian Peoples’ Aid have removed and exploded more than 420 landmines during 1999 - clearing an area of 48,000 square kilometres in Kwanza Norte Province. This positive news is however negated by the fact that belligerents have started laying mines anew. Of course, Norwegian Peoples’ Aid is not the only demining group active in Angola. Other demining groups include Halo Trust, Cap Anamur, and the Mines Advisory Group. Various governments, including the Netherlands, the United States, the United Kingdom and those of the various Nordic countries financially contribute to these demining activities.

In addition to demining, the British NGOs Global Witness and Saferworld have conducted extensive research on Angola. Meanwhile Search for Common Ground has set up a centre in Luanda whose purpose is to promote civil society and dialogue between the MPLA and UNITA and prepare media productions. With funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Africare, Catholic Relief Services, and World Vision civic education programmes are conducted; whilst the Conflict Management Group with funding from USAID has been providing conflict resolution training at the grassroots level. Creative Associates has been developing Community Revitalization Projects in both UNITA and government-controlled territory with a view to promote reconciliation. Other INGOs active in Angola include Caritas, Save the Children, the International Republic Institute and the National Democratic Institute.

What is clear regarding the activities of these INGOs is that there is a great need for greater co-ordination of activities.

---

89 Posthumus, op. cit., p. 403.
90 Ibid., p. 403.
between them and also greater collaboration between these and local NGOs. It is hoped, as was mentioned earlier, that such dynamic partnerships would also result in the strengthening of local actors as a result of the transfer of skills.

The close interaction between the MPLA government and big oil companies has been alluded to previously. It is from oil that the MPLA funds its war machine. It is from the profit of oil that the MPLA keeps its system of political patronage working. But it is deeper than this. According to the British NGO, Global Witness, it is a “lack of corporate transparency [that] has encouraged massive corruption, impoverishing Angolans and obstructing the search for a real peace initiative” 92. According to Global Witness, “...the international oil and banking sectors are the key factor in this equation of corruption and opacity” 93. What is clear is that Multinational Corporations (MNCs) needs to think more in terms of long-term rather than short-term perspectives, it needs to place peace and people before profits. In order to force such MNCs to think in these terms and to operate more transparently to minimise corruption and to ensure that Angola’s people benefit from its resources, it is imperative that organisations such as Transparency International monitor the activities of these companies. In addition, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) should make further loans to Luanda contingent upon greater fiscal transparency.

Another very influential external actor is the United Nations (UN) that aims to bring about a negotiated settlement between the parties through dialogue. Despite its avowed aim the UN, through its actions, has resulted in encouraging the military option in Angola and further minimising any chance of constructive dialogue between the belligerents. Consider the following, as explained above – both UNITA and the MPLA have atrocious human rights records. UNITA sells the country’s diamonds to fund its war machine, whilst the MPLA funds its war machine through the sale of oil. In both cases, the ordinary people do not benefit from the wealth of their own country. The UN then places sanctions on one party with a view to bring about dialogue, this does not seem to make sense.

93 Ibid., p. 1.
These sanctions placed on UNITA by the UN are of a comprehensive nature and include the prohibition of the “... sale or delivery of arms and military equipment to UNITA; prohibit the provision of petroleum products to UNITA; prohibit the purchase of diamonds mined in areas controlled by UNITA; require the seizing of bank accounts and other financial assets of UNITA; and mandate the closing of UNITA representation, abroad as well as restrictions on the travel of senior UNITA officials and adult members of their immediate families” ⁹⁴. At the same time as imposing these sanctions, the UN Security Council noted, “... that the purpose of the sanctions was not to punish UNITA but rather to promote a political settlement to the long conflict in Angola by ... limiting UNITA’s ability to pursue its objectives by military means” ⁹⁵. If this was its aim, then certainly it could be argued that following the Fowler Report, the UN’s policy of further closing any sanctions loopholes could be fanning the flames of military confrontation. For instance, the further sharpening of sanctions, especially those of a military nature, could have been viewed by the MPLA as the ideal time to increase their military offensive against UNITA since it was viewed to be in a weaker military situation as a result of the sanctions. Thus in March, 2000 at a meeting of the ruling MPLA party’s central committee it was felt that a “military option remained the only solution to the ongoing crisis” ⁹⁶.

One may also question the effectiveness of UN sanctions imposed on UNITA at other levels. For instance, the same UN report notes that the sources of UNITA’s arms and equipment emanates from two sources “... large quantities were imported from Eastern Europe, and substantial quantities were captured by UNITA from Government forces in battle” ⁹⁷. This latter point is also confirmed by UNITA that noted that it “... captured arms it could no longer buy from its former allies because of UN sanctions” ⁹⁸. Given these facts, it is surprising indeed that the UN would allow

---

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 2.
one side to purchase arms, when those arms would find its way into UNITA hands. This situation is further complicated by the fact that UNITA has several stockpiles of arms and ammunition hidden away. Obviously, what is needed is an immediate re-think in the UN position.

Another external actor is the Southern African Development Community (SADC). At first glance, the SADC position on Angola seems straightforward: at its June, 1998 Summit in Mauritius, SADC declared Jonas Savimbi a war criminal. The SADC position on Savimbi was reinforced in August 1999 at the organisation’s Maputo Summit when it agreed to supply FAA soldiers with uniforms and other material needs. At closer inspection, however, various cracks within SADC emerge on the Angolan situation. Whilst President Dos Santos has the support of President Nujoma of Namibia, President Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, it is equally clear that Maputo, Lusaka, Gaborone and Pretoria all share a belief that only a negotiated settlement would resolve the Angolan crisis. For instance Daniel Ngwepe, a South African foreign policy spokesman has said, “South Africa has always maintained that the road to lasting peace is only through a concerted effort to address root causes of the problems. If the MPLA or if UNITA win on the battlefield, the problem will not go away. We have called for a dialogue and a negotiated solution.”

What is clear is that over time, one would slowly see the strengthening of the pro-peace lobby within SADC that could positively impact on prospects for Angolan peace. The reason for this optimism relates to the fact that all MPLA allies – Messrs Kabila, Mugabe, and Nujoma – are facing mounting internal pressures which could result in their becoming more inward-looking which would allow others to reformulate the SADC position as this would also give Harare, Kinshasa and Windhoek a face-saving way out of the conflict. It is also imperative that the

99 This SADC declaration was political as opposed to juridical and has no impact in terms of international law.
100 Solomon, op. cit., p. 28.
international community supports the pro-peace lobby within SADC.
4 International Risk Assessment

The internationalisation of the Angola conflict is plain for all to see. The recent United Nations report\(^\text{102}\) makes clear the role of South African nationals, Mobutu’s Zaire, Lissouba’s Congo-Brazzaville, Togo, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Zambia\(^\text{103}\) and Bulgaria in assisting UNITA with arms procurement or fuel or assisting the rebel movement with diamond smuggling. Of course, these sanctions need to be maintained and sharpened as a point of leverage (together with new sanctions being placed on the MPLA) to bring UNITA to the negotiating table.

However, there is reason to believe that human greed continues to defy the most sophisticated of sanctions. Thus Professor Malema\(^\text{104}\) notes that despite the accusations that they are fuelling the war in Angola, Antwerp’s diamond dealers are still working under the motto of “a dollar is a dollar” and business continues as normal. The Antwerp trading centre is of critical importance since it holds approximately 90 percent of the world’s rough diamonds yet it still has not black-listed Angolan diamonds. Meanwhile Ishbel Matheson notes that despite the UN ban, foreign diamond traders under the pretext of being botanists, butterfly-collectors and preachers continue to flock to the Angolan-Zambian border where they continue with their illicit trade\(^\text{105}\). Of course, this is a situation that needs to be rectified with the utmost urgency.

The spill-over effects of the Angolan civil war seriously threaten to engulf several Central and Southern African states in a regional conflagration. In an effort of shutting down UNITA’s supply routes and training camps, FAA has militarily intervened in support of Denis Sassou-Nguesso in Congo-Brazzaville and Laurent Kabila in the DRC. But this action by FAA may be


\(^{103}\) Ishbel Matheson, “Zambia’s Diamond Trade Thrives,” British Broadcasting Corporation, 19 April 2000, 12h37 GMT.

\(^{104}\) Professor Malema, “Antwerp yet to Black-List Angolan Diamond,” Mmegi/The Reporter (Gaborone), 10 April 2000.

\(^{105}\) Matheson, op. cit.
counter-productive since UNITA is said to have forged strategic alliances with the ‘Ninja’ militia - supporters of former Prime Minister Bernard Kolelas - who was fighting Sassou-Ngeusso’s troops in the Pool region of Congo-Brazzaville. UNITA is also said to have very strong ties with Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) rebels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In a move, equally as counter-productive, UNITA in an attempt to forestall Namibia’s involvement in the Angolan war provided training to Caprivi secessionists\textsuperscript{106} in the form of the Caprivi Liberation Army. This, however, resulted in Windhoek taking a stance against Savimbi’s UNITA. What follows below is a brief account of the regional spill-over effects of the Angolan conflict which proves the truism that insecurity anywhere is a threat to security everywhere.

In December 1999 Namibia announced that it will support an Angolan offensive against UNITA and allowed Angolan troops to use northern Namibia to stage its offensive against the UNITA rebels encamped in southern Angola\textsuperscript{107}. A fortnight after this announcement FAA and the Namibian Defence Force (NDF) jointly blasted suspected UNITA rebel strongholds in southern Angola from positions on the Namibian side of the border\textsuperscript{108}. This was followed by the NDF engaging in “hot pursuit operations” against suspected UNITA rebels on its own\textsuperscript{109}.

Northern Namibia has borne the brunt of the spill-over of the Angolan civil war. In the first instance, as the fighting intensified in southern Angola, refugees fled the fighting and sought refuge in northern Namibia. By the first week of January, there were already 7,000 refugees in Namibia\textsuperscript{110}. Secondly, the areas of Kavango and Caprivi in northern Namibia have been experiencing a deteriorating humanitarian and security situation with reports of a harsh crackdown by the NDF against suspected

\textsuperscript{106} Solomon, op. cit., p. 27.
\textsuperscript{107} “Namibia: Government says it will back an Angolan offensive,” IRIN News Brief, 14 December 2000.
\textsuperscript{110} “Namibia-Angola: IRIN Focus on border conflict,” IRIN News Brief, 5 January 2000.
separatists and UNITA sympathisers\textsuperscript{111}. Thirdly, the area has been subjected to various attacks alleged to have been conducted by UNITA in response to Windhoek’s support to the MPLA and FAA. Thus, mid-December witnessed the shelling of northern Namibian towns that injured eight people\textsuperscript{112}. Early January saw the murder of three French tourists and an attack on aid workers in the remote north-east Caprivi Strip\textsuperscript{113}. Two weeks later, four Namibians, including three nurses were ambushed on the same road as were the French tourists\textsuperscript{114}. In addition to the attacks on Namibian towns and the ambushing of civilians, February 2000 witnessed the shelling of police stations\textsuperscript{115}. March, meanwhile saw two 122mm rockets fired from Angola landing in northern Namibia\textsuperscript{116}; whilst April witnessed a further six people killed in Rundu in north-east Namibia by suspected UNITA rebels\textsuperscript{117}.

Faced with a deteriorating security situation with an enemy adept at guerrilla warfare, as well as with dwindling public support for involvement in the Angolan and Democratic Republic of the Congo civil wars, it is clear that there is a re-think emerging on the part of the Nujoma administration which is now calling for negotiations with UNITA\textsuperscript{118}. This is very positive as it could lead to the strengthening of the pro-peace lobby within SADC.

Another country suffering the adverse consequences of Angola’s civil war is Zambia. Zambia is currently playing host to 160,000 Angolan refugees\textsuperscript{119}. The humanitarian consequences notwithstanding, it is also thought that these refugees pose a security threat to the Zambian State on two counts. Firstly, it is

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113}“Namibia: Namibian troops pursue UNITA,” IRIN News Brief, 6 January 2000.
\textsuperscript{115}“Angola dismisses South Africa’s call for talks,” Reuters News Service, 18 February 2000.
\textsuperscript{116}“Namibia: Rocket attacks on Rundu,” IRIN News Brief, 13 March 2000.
\textsuperscript{117}“Namibia: Six killed in UNITA attacks,” IRIN News Brief, 17 April 2000.
\textsuperscript{118}“Angola dismissed South Africa’s call for talks,” Reuters News Service, 18 February 2000.
known that thousands of armed UNITA rebels have slipped into south-western Zambia among the refugees. Hypothetically, these could play the same role as the Interahamwe militia played in the former Zaire; that is using these camps for recruitment purposes and as staging areas to attack the Angolan State as well as to destabilise the whole of south-western Zambia. This takes on greater importance if one considers the demands for a separate Barotseland in that part of Zambia. Secondly, given the fact that the refugees in Angola arise from both government-controlled and UNITA controlled areas there are fears that fighting may break out within refugee camps as well as that they may be viewed as targets by the belligerents. Already FAA and Zambian soldiers have exchanged fire in Chizeze and Chavuma in north-western Zambia. Meanwhile UNITA insurgents have conducted hit-and-run attacks against eight villages across Zambia’s western border where they have laid landmines to hamper pursuit.

What needs to be done on the part of the international community seems clear. In addition to providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees, there is an urgent need for some security presence whose task would be two-fold. Firstly, to provide protection to bona fide refugees from external attack. Secondly, to disarm and separate combatants from refugees and to ensure that these camps do not become recruitment centres for any armed force.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has also had its own internal conflict dynamics impacted upon by the Angolan civil war. This has witnessed Angola’s belligerents supporting different sides of the conflict in this central African State. Whilst Laurent Kabila’s embattled regime enjoys the military support of FAA, the RCD rebels are in alliance with UNITA. The support rendered to the RCD is not unsubstantial. As early as January 1999, an anti-aircraft (SAM-16) battery and crew was sent to assist the RCD under the command of Captain Jose Kwalo and Major

Chipepe. Currently, UNITA is said to have four battalions and four companies deployed in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in support of the RCD. The following areas of deployment exist: one battalion at Bukavu; one battalion at Goma; two battalions at Kavuma airport; two companies at Walikale; and two companies at Pinga.

From a conflict resolution perspective, what does all this mean? As these conflicts in the various countries drag on, the conflict dynamics in each country, from a conflict resolution viewpoint, become increasingly interlocked with those other countries, forming a single conflict system. In time, such a conflict system needs to be tackled holistically and in an integrated manner as opposed to any piecemeal effort at resolving any ‘national’ conflict.

---

124 Solomon, op. cit., p. 27.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


“Angola to pay civil servants and some debts,” Reuters News Service, 10 February 2000.


Buchizya Mseteka, “Interview – Angola’s UNITA in military shake-up,”


“Cuba drums up African support for G77 Summit,” Reuters News


Jersey, USA.

special_report/1999/01/99/angola/newsid_263.../263954.st.

Comparative Analysis of Angola and South Africa. Mimeo.

Jensen, H. “War a Bomming Business in Angola For Many Years,”

Malema, Prof. “Antwerp yet to Black-List Angolan Diamond,”
Mmegi/The Reporter (Gaborone), 10 April 2000.

Matheson, I. “Zambia’s Diamond Trade Thrives,” British Broadcasting
Corporation, 19 April 2000.


Angola: A Case Study of Aggression, Avarice and Anguish


Roberts, M. “UNITA Makes Fresh Call for Talks to End Angola War,”


“Zambia: Two Angolan soldiers held,” IRIN News Brief, 24 March 2000;
**ANNEX**

**Key dates in Angola’s recent history**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>MPLA founded to end 300 years of Portuguese colonialism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Armed struggle begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>US-backed, northern-based FNLA founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>UNITA founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Alleged attempted coup fails but results in bloody reprisals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>President Agostinho Neto dies, replaced by Jose Eduardo dos Santos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Gbadolite peace accords brokered by Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko, but soon collapses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Bicesse peace accords brokered by Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>UNITA rejects results of multiparty elections won by MPLA and returns to war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Lusaka peace accord brokered by UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Cease-fire breaks down, Angola returns to state of war</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Interview with Jonas Savimbi

"Internet interview" with UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi, in Angola, by Folha 8 editor William Tonet in Amsterdam - item originally filed by Folha 8 on 5 May 2000

[FBIS Translated Text]

Jonas Savimbi, president of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola [UNITA], has given an interview to Folha 8, in which, among other things, he says he would not surrender, and that he is capable of continuing to resist. Said Savimbi: “I would be willing to negotiate at length the causes of our differences, and make it possible to move toward peace. Angola should continue to have a rotten peace, which only appeals to ideological interests.” [sentence as received] He said if the MPLA [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola], Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and the United Nations “merely wish to physically eliminate me, then the war will continue because we need to defend ourselves. All they are doing is to postpone a solution that sooner or later would have to be adopted.”

This interview was conducted from Amsterdam under tight security imposed by J. Sanguesse, an old friend and confidant of the UNITA leader. Having accepted the conditions, the correspondent was taken blindfold to the venue of the interview. “These are security measures. You know, they might have been following you,” said Sanguesse, who refused to be introduced as a Black Cockerel representative. “I am merely a coreligionist.” He said he was brought up with Savimbi and studied together in Switzerland, and that he was doing this for the sake of Angola. “We have to find a door for true peace.”

The phone rang. After the usual greetings, the UNITA leader suggested that the rest of the conversation should be through Yahoo.

Tonet: Dr. Jonas Savimbi, the country is bleeding, the economy has ground to a halt, there are about 3 million
displaced persons, people who have been maimed, widows, and so on. Why do you no stop the war?

Savimbi: I can stop the war, but they want to kill me. Do you think I should allow myself to be killed? It is possible to bring this war to an end at any moment, and for that to happen a meeting or a summit between the two sides is indispensable. Jose Eduardo dos Santos cannot regard himself as a man with sufficient military capacity to end the war, while rejecting dialogue, or saying that he has already negotiated everything. In life, let alone in politics, nothing is absolute. He should prove everything that he has negotiated, and that unlike the MPLA, UNITA has never fulfilled an agreement that it has signed. Has the MPLA addressed the trauma caused by its militants on 27 May [1977 - foiled coup attempt]? Has the MPLA fulfilled its promises to the war veterans? Has the MPLA fulfilled its promises of water, bread, and health for Luanda, Cabinda, and Namibe, which have never experienced war? If the MPLA can answer these questions and prove what it is saying, then UNITA would have never fulfilled an agreement. Otherwise, this issue is a closed book. Nonetheless, Angolans should overcome the politicians' whims, and make us talk and talk so as to put an end to the suffering of our people.

Tonet: So, why do you not let the government and the United Nations know of your intentions?

Savimbi: I would like to do that and stop the war. Unfortunately, if I do that, the MPLA and the United Nations have already stated what I should expect: death. They have given me no option but to defend myself and prevent the extermination of my people. I believe it is necessary to truly reform Angola's political system. Politically, the country has come to a standstill. It is stuck, and split over the government's lack of political initiative, and the demagoguery and impotence of certain political sectors bent on the continuation of the war merely to fatten their personal bank accounts.

Tonet: Are you in a position to continue fighting after having lost 80 percent of your military capacity?
Savimbi: Those are MPLA government statistics and I am not sure whether they reflect the reality. We have been defending our military capacity, just like the government. And proof of that is that the war has not scaled down. On the contrary, Jose Eduardo dos Santos is like someone trying to close an old water pipe. He closes one end of the pipe, but then water comes out on the other. So, the 80 percent statistic is misleading. We are aware that that is a ploy to make people believe in those who are for war as a means of attaining peace. It is a crazy palliative. Before, they used to say that I was the one who stood for war. After all, one can see today that Jose Eduardo dos Santos is more of a warmonger than one has ever thought. Maybe he has ulterior motives. Who knows...

Tonet: Why do you not send signals that you are for peace and tolerance?

Savimbi: The United Nations, the MPLA, and the countries interested in plundering our wealth have closed all the doors. That amounts to pure racial discrimination on the part of the United Nations. Why were members of the apartheid regime not prevented from moving freely when sanctions were imposed on them? Was it because they were white? Africans and Africa would have to think carefully about the dubious behavior of certain institutions and western countries. If the International Court of Justice is in fact unbiased, then it should not have qualms about putting these elements and institutions on trial for preventing dialogue as a means of ending the conflict in our country.

Tonet: But would you be willing to stop the war?

Savimbi: I am willing to negotiate, but never to surrender. My cadres - the true UNITA militants - would never give up giving fighting because they are committed to resolving the profound causes of the Angolan conflict. Nobody in his right mind can distort Angola’s problems dividing us today. It is incorrect to say that this conflict is merely a question of seizing power by force. We have not addressed the ethnic, social, and economic imbalances, let alone the regional distortions. But you should bear in mind that the problem does not affect UNITA alone. In Luanda,
the regime is only able to survive by dividing the other parities. Even within the MPLA, there are a great many people unhappy with the course of events, and believe in change. But they are at a disadvantage. That is why I believe there are a great many things to negotiate at length so as to prevent Angolans from continuing to bet on a rotten peace.

Tonet: But the government has accused you of never adhering to the accords that you have signed.

Savimbi: How come? That is false, it does not correspond to the reality. If I do not adhere to the accords, so does the other side. That is the reality. There are no angels in this matter.

Tonet: But you are not answering my question...

Savimbi: Then listen to me: Maybe UNITA and the MPLA have never discussed Angola's real problems at length, problems that go beyond our ideological interests and party politics. But there is one thing everyone should understand - politically the country has come to a standstill. It is stuck, and split over the government's lack of political initiative, and the impotence of certain opposition politicians. I have never vowed to kill Jose Eduardo dos Santos, but by wanting to kill me, he is promoting state terrorism. That amounts to a crime in any part of the world, but people just keep quiet. The United States says it has lost contact with me. That is not true. By endorsing the decision to bar the movements of any UNITA member, the United States took a one-sided decision, adhering to the Futungo de Belas warmongering option. A number of countries, nongovernmental organizations, and the United Nations have adopted a similar attitude. With measures like this it is obvious that they do not want peace. That is political striptease. [preceding word in English] We should be serious if we do want to save Angola.

Tonet: And what would that mean as the war ravages on?

Savimbi: It means a lot. When democracy slips into a mundane and rotten peace, and is at the mercy of a self-styled, dictatorial, and bureaucratic leader who corrupts institutions and corporations, then someone of a moral standing should raise the
alarm, startle people, and stir the stagnant waters. The problem with the president and his warlike team is that they have done nothing. If one takes stock of their performance, it would show that is was negative for Angolans, but positive for foreigners fanning the war. The MPLA and President Dos Santos do not wish to understand that the greater their commitment to the policy of exterminating UNITA, the wider the divide they would be creating between them and the people. The stifling caused by so much poverty, famine, lack of medical care and education, and corruption cannot be eternally concealed from the people. The increase in the price of fuel was yet another example of how the regime is insensitive to the people's needs.

Tonet: Do you not believe that if you retire from politics you could contribute to the stability of the country?

Savimbi: How can one persuade a people and a movement, whose members have been excluded and discriminated against, to watch their leader shrugging his shoulders and go into a golden exile, without showing much concern for the fate of those who believe in a more just, honest and caring Angola? I am not fighting for money or commissions in millions of dollars at the expense of the blood shed by our soldiers. If that were the case, I would have amassed enough money by now to buy several isles around the world and live like a king. But all the money that we have is spent on the revolution, to defend ourselves, and for our survival. Find out what property do I own abroad and then do the same with those who are for the continuation of the war. Find out how their personal bank accounts are getting fatter in time of war and at the expense of the country's resources. That would be a way of issuing an independent verdict. The country's wealth is in the hands of a minority, but the majority, who have been deprived of everything, gets the crumbs, cynically handed out to them.

Tonet: UNITA has been accused of having acquired arms during the application of the Lusaka Protocol.

Savimbi: The MPLA also acquired arms. It was the first to violate the triple zero clause of the Protocol. I am not saying that we did not rearm ourselves afterward. That is a fact. We cannot
allow ourselves to be slaughtered, but I think we should not carry on thinking of the past. We are facing a dramatic situation, and the future would be equally dramatic if the MPLA opts for the extermination of UNITA. But you should be certain of one thing: I will not die like a dog.

Tonet: Why do you talk of discrimination?

Savimbi: By betting on the continuation of the war, the ruling party is intrinsically committed to the extermination of a significant portion of the Angolan people, who happens to be the majority. Unfortunately, Angola is one of the few southern African countries where two minorities are in charge, not only politically and economically, but also militarily, which makes things worse.

Tonet: How do you view UNITA-Renewed?

Savimbi: I do not know what you are talking about.

Tonet: I am talking about the movement created by Valentim, Manuvakola, and Chilinguitila.

Savimbi: My guerrilla experience tells me that one should not waste time, or rather, a politician should not waste time talking about or stigmatizing puppets. I do not comment on puppets. Those who have fled UNITA and are today the government's bedfellows know that the money that we have is spent on the survival of the revolution. They can call me whatever they want, but they can never accuse me of being corrupt. I do not get rich with bloodstained money. The Valentims will never succeed in life. Do they have a house? Are they politically independent to think for themselves and write for the press? Is that not how the MPLA tames the opposition? They have all been dominated by the political game. That is not a way of building a country because they would always feel resentful. To be in a latent stage poses a greater threat than guerrilla warfare.

Tonet: Would you like to elaborate?
Savimbi: UNITA has been used as a pretext for certain fortunes to grow fatter. We would like to discuss the profound causes of our differences, but do not want the MPLA with its power and money to be able to bribe the international community through timeframes and undertakings which afterward prove to be nothing but palliatives.

Tonet: But your son has also criticized you.

Savimbi: UNITA has shown dignity, and proof of that is that we have always upheld the best of Angola's culture. I would never steal my opponent's child. And he knows that his children are in a vulnerable situation. I do not subscribe to dirty politics. That does not dignify people. Wars have rules, and what they have done with my son is despicable and shows that the culprits are ignorant of the rules, and could not care less about our cultural values.

Tonet: What are your conditions for negotiations?

Savimbi: The negotiations should be at a national level. Like UNITA, the regime should accept the presence of other sectors of civil society and the churches. In the past both UNITA and the MPLA rejected that. We have fought for many decades for the assertion and establishment of our (MPLA/UNITA) political programs. Now, I hope it would be possible for us to discuss Angola in-depth - the profound Angola that I know, and the one that I do not; the superficial Angola. Jose Eduardo dos Santos should follow suit. The day he understands Angola's deep-rooted aspirations, he would realize that most of the things that divide us are minute in comparison to the real problems that our people face, and go beyond the ideological disputes that stand between us. There are no ongoing contacts, and there will not be any if the idea is to seek our complete capitulation, our fighters included. Some of them could desert their ranks. That is normal in any guerrilla war. How many people have deserted the MPLA's ranks and are still deserting in view of the party's internal situation? There have been a great many desertions, but the problem is that it is not on the news because Eduardo dos Santos' regime does not allow it. When the MPLA says the war is
continuing because of UNITA, it is bluffing. [preceding word in English]

Tonet: What about sanctions?

Savimbi: Sanctions cannot prevent our struggle's goal from being accomplished, because today it is a struggle for survival, a struggle in self-defense so that we are not all exterminated. But the United Nations and the West have imposed sanctions, while creating consumer mechanisms. Just like they sell to the government, they also wish to sell to us. Fortunately, the Angolan Armed Forces buy weapons for our soldiers, and it is for this reason that we have been able to resist. One day if the world changes, a great many gentlemen who have blindly stood for sanctions on UNITA could be held accountable for the extermination of the peoples of Angola. Nobody wants to listen to the views of our party, and to what we are thinking now. That is a violation of human rights. We have not stood trial. History will try me and will do justice for what I have done well and wrong. I am convinced that the ones who want to send me to the gallows would not go unpunished. They could even be crushed by the winds of change.

Tonet: Why do you accuse both the MPLA and the United Nations?

Savimbi: They want to kill me and exterminate the majority of the Ovimbundu. If that is not the case, then one does not see the need for them to be committed to war after having managed to seize our areas. As they see it, the taking of Bailundo, Andulo, and N'haarea were the last hurdles before the goals set by the Lusaka Protocol could be fulfilled. Yet, they have not stopped there, and now everybody questions whether their final objective is the attainment of peace. If that were the case, Eduardo dos Santos should have talked already about peace and negotiations. A few westerners, who interpret our conflict somewhat vaguely, find it convenient to overlook the world's reality so as to further their neocolonial designs. Peace cannot be accomplished by these means, unless one is aiming at a rotten peace.
Tonet: You have been accused of being a racist. In fact, you have spoken against whites in a great many of your speeches.

Savimbi: A racist? The MPLA is more racist than I am because it uses whites and mestizos for its hidden agenda. UNITA members know where they stand. They know the role that they have to play as Angolan patriots. Unfortunately, with the MPLA it is the minorities that are in control of the military, economic, and even political sectors. They are like guinea pigs. Yet, more important than pinning labels on each other, it would be better and of utmost interest if the MPLA would heed the Catholic bishops' call as we have done because it could result in all patriotic politicians, including the civil society, seriously looking at our past, present, and future; the future of Angola's children and youth. For the first time, at this decisive moment, the churches and civil society could be the suitable conduits for reconciliation among brothers.

Tonet: And if that does not happen in the near future?

Savimbi: There would be a serious crisis. It would be a profound and unavoidable crisis that would imperil our survival. A great many intellectuals and important sectors of our society are lying dormant. They lack the wealth that a minority has been amassing thanks to this war. In addition to being an oil exporting country, Angola is also a leading remitter of capital held by the ruling elite. UNITA is not the cause, but the effect of the distortions and lack of patriotism of those in power and who subvert institutions so as to stay put.