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ANGOLA - Endgame or Stalemate?

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INTRODUCTION

Late on 1 April, Antonio Dembo, the deputy president of the *União Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (UNITA), arrived in Luanda with three other senior officials of the party to reopen the UNITA office closed and largely destroyed during the fighting of 1992. UNITA spokesperson, Isaias Samakuva, said that Dembo had come to launch UNITA officially as a political party in the capital. The delegation would also "*make every effort to create the conditions for Dr Savimbi to come to Luanda as soon as possible.*" The delegation was met at the airport by Alioune Blondin Beye, the United Nations special envoy to Angola, and the ambassadors of the three powers that have helped to implement the Lusaka Protocol of 1994: the United States, Portugal and Russia. UNITA also announced that its radio station, 'Voice of the Black Cockerel' (Vorgan), would stop broadcasting that evening, in accordance with the latest agreements on the implementation of the peace timetable.

This timetable also made provision for UNITA's leadership, including Savimbi, to move to Luanda from the headquarters at Bailundo and Andulo and for the government to extend its control over those centres. A presidential spokesperson, however, seemed to concede that there would be some delay in achieving this, pending UNITA's preparations on the ground. He indicated that the government did not want a situation to arise in which the use of force became necessary.

Did these developments signify that the war in Angola was coming to an end? Ordinary Angolans seemed sceptical after more than thirty years of largely futile conflict which has seen their country reduced to a shambles. Not only has the Angolan infrastructure been destroyed, but hundreds of thousands of Angolans have been killed, millions displaced and tens of thousands maimed by the landmines emplaced by all the parties to the war. Most Angolans continue to suffer acute shortages of food and basic necessities; many have starved to death. Angola's oil and diamond wealth has been largely wasted in financing the military effort of the antagonists or in satisfying the appetites of their leaders.

ANCESTRAL VOICES ...

The search for the origins and principal causes of the war is a complicated one. Much of the course of the conflict has to do with the intervention of external forces, much with the contingencies of military and political miscalculation and the unintended consequences of the decisions of the ambitious and the reckless. Certainly, informing the configurations of popular support which sustained the combatants in the early phases was the uneven colonial history of Angola, and the experiences of various peoples and regions. As in so many African states, it is this phenomenon, rather than any basic conflict of traditional cultural groups, that is fundamental to an understanding of the social and political cleavages as they developed in Angola.

When the Portuguese first entered the Angolan scene at the end of the 15th Century, they made contact with the relatively sophisticated Kingdom of Kongo, which exercised control over a wide area from its centre at the mouth of the Zaire River. Portugal's initial interest in the Kongo kingdom was largely missionary in nature, but slave-trading soon came to dominate relations with the local peoples, particularly after the opening up of the colony of

Brazil in the 1530s. The effects of the slave trade were essentially destructive and a series of internal wars allowed the Portuguese to erode the autonomy of the kingdom. Soon, the attention of the Portuguese shifted southwards to the area around Luanda, which became one of the principal centres for the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The traffic in human beings came to dominate the economy of Angola and in the course of 350 years it is estimated that some three million Africans were exported through Angolan ports - many of them to Brazil and Cuba.

The trade in human beings helped to establish a pattern of exploitation and relative advantage that goes a long way in explaining the historical memories and cultural attitudes that underpin much of Angola's current political configuration. Ultimately, it was the Mbundu-speaking peoples of Luanda and its hinterland who became the collaborators with the Portuguese slavers, exploiting the human wealth of the Angolan interior.

This pattern of perceived advantage and exploitation survived the end of the slave trade. It persisted into the 20th Century, by which time there had developed a class of *assimilados* and *mestiços*, in the Angolan ports and their hinterlands, who enjoyed an existence more privileged than that of their fellow Angolans of whom many were subjected to a form of rural slavery. This cultural division, largely the result of the effects of uneven development during the colonial period, continues to inform the political allegiances so firmly engraved on Angola. It is worth noting that Savimbi's rhetoric, when addressing rural audiences in the vernacular, is quite different from the persuasive and moderate tone he uses on the Western media: his appeal to his followers is unashamedly racist, in particular reviling the 'non-Angolan' origins of many government leaders, including the President, whom he refers to as a São Toméan.

The modern Angolan nationalist movement emerged in three streams, determined largely by ethnic and regional considerations, and each with its own foreign backers. Firstly, in Luanda itself, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) was established in 1956, led from 1962 by Agostinho Neto, and received support from Cuba and the Soviet Union. There were also two movements with a largely peasant orientation. One emerged in the Bakongo area in 1962, to form the *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA) under Holden Roberto, supported by China and Zaire. The other arose among the Ovimbundu and Chokwe peoples to become the *União Nacional de Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) in 1966, led by Jonas Savimbi and aided by the US. Each of these three organisations claimed broader national support outside its regional base and each was as bitterly hostile to its rivals as to their common colonial enemy.

THE WAR BEGINS

Large scale violence began in 1961, but the Portuguese authorities and settlers savagely repressed attempted uprisings in the north and in Luanda, and a protracted guerrilla war followed. In the event, Angola's nationalists were only indirectly responsible for Portugal's decision to abdicate power in the colony. Junior officers in the Portuguese army, tired of the wasteful and apparently endless cycle of African colonial wars crippling their country, seized power in Lisbon on 25 April 1974.

This caught Angola's nationalists by surprise, but the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) pressed the three rival organisations to seek Portugal's consent to Angolan independence. In the Alvor Accord of January 1975, the new authorities in Lisbon recognised the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA as the sole legitimate representatives of the Angolan people. Independence was set for 11 November 1975 and an interim coalition government chosen to draft a constitution and hold elections.

This fragile Accord was effectively shattered when certain elements in Washington became alarmed at the prospect of unacceptable Eastern bloc influence in a 'traditionally pro-Western' region, and began to provide large scale financial and military assistance to what they saw as the two non-communist nationalist organisations opposing the MPLA. Fighting broke out again in February 1975.

A new accord failed to secure the peace and by July heavy fighting had spread throughout Angola once more. The US pumped in millions of dollars worth of military equipment and

supplies for the FNLA and UNITA, allegedly to match the aid being provided to the MPLA by Cuba and the Soviets.

In August 1975, South African troops entered southern Angola to protect the Cunene River hydroelectric scheme. By the following month, they were more directly involved in support of UNITA. October 1975 saw a concerted effort by FNLA and UNITA forces aided by a South African column to advance on MPLA-held Luanda. The beleaguered MPLA forces received timely injections of Cuban aid and troops which just enabled them to withstand this assault. The turning point, however, was the US Congress' repudiation of its government's covert Angolan policy. South Africa, internationally isolated and without a viable political or diplomatic objective, withdrew its dangerously exposed forces and the MPLA survived to assume the reins of government from the Portuguese, who had long since abandoned the battlefield. Dr Agostinho Neto was sworn in as Angola's first president. For the next few years he set about establishing a one-party state with Marxism-Leninism as its guiding ideology.

The Angola inherited by the MPLA government was in a terrible state. The fighting and the exodus of almost all the white settlers had left the country largely without skilled manpower. Most of the commercial farms and businesses had been abandoned and the communications infrastructure had suffered massive damage.

The MPLA's victories in the campaigning of 1975-1976 proved merely the opening rounds of a twenty-year civil war. Both the FNLA and UNITA regrouped their forces and, with external aid, continued to fight against the MPLA government. FNLA activity ceased to be a threat in 1978, following an agreement between Dr Neto and General Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire. However, UNITA went from strength to strength and was ultimately able not only to deny MPLA control over much of southern and central Angola, but also to launch attacks into Luanda's suburbs. South African raids into southern Angola against the South-West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) and in support of UNITA effectively devastated that part of the country.

Dr Neto died in 1979 and was succeeded as President by José Eduardo dos Santos. The ruinous war continued unabated, and it was only after the emergence of democratic movements in Eastern Europe, the threatening collapse of the Soviet bloc, and South Africa's willingness to relinquish its hold over Namibia that it became possible to contemplate the prospect of eventual peace in Angola itself. South African and Cuban troops withdrew between 1989 and 1991, and in May 1991, UNITA and the Angolan government signed the Bicesse Peace Accords. The agreement provided the basis for the mandate for a UN verification mission (UNAVEM II) which included the stipulation that government and UNITA forces should be disarmed and demobilised and a new Angolan armed force established before the elections, to be held by September 1992. In the event, the UNAVEM II mandate proved disastrously inadequate, not least because the UN observers were limited to the monitoring of the work of Angolan monitors. There was no provision for the discovery of hidden arms caches, nor for penalties for non-compliance with the terms of the peace Accord. The shell of a unified army was created on the very eve of the elections, integrating less than twenty per cent of the combatants. The bulk of the rival forces thus remained under arms.

ELECTIONS AND THE RESUMPTION OF WAR

Elections were held on 29 and 30 September 1992, and UN arrangements again fell short of what was prudent, let alone desirable. Only some 400 electoral observers were available to monitor and verify 6 000 election points in 164 municipalities in a country with virtually no infrastructure.

Initially it seemed that the risks being taken might prove justified and matters appeared to be going well, but when the MPLA emerged with a clear parliamentary majority and Dos Santos, having failed by the slimmest of margins to secure an outright win in the first round of voting, seemed set to retain the presidency, UNITA claimed that this could be the result only of widespread fraud, and remobilised its forces. This was a fairly easy process. Fighting now resumed on an intensified scale. Although UNITA was driven from the capital, following the systematic slaughter of thousands of its supposed supporters, it had succeeded in seizing control of almost three-quarters of the country by the middle of 1993. The government

reorganised its army and gradually succeeded in regaining the upper hand, with the assistance of substantial mercenary reinforcements and advisors. The UN brokered a series of talks between the two sides in Lusaka, and after a year of negotiations, new accords were signed in November 1994. These provided for the demobilisation of the rival armies and the resumption of peaceful political activity. In February 1995, the UN Security Council approved the deployment of UNAVEM III, a monitoring force of some 7 000 personnel to supervise the disarmament and encampment of the rival armies prior to their incorporation in a unified army.

ANOTHER PEACE?

UNAVEM III's deployment was slow, and its mandate a limited one. This and other UN shortcomings enabled UNITA to protest that its failure to stick to the timetable for the disarmament and quartering of its combatants was no fault of its own. Similarly, when UNITA troops began to desert the UN monitored encampments in ever increasing numbers, the blame was placed at UNAVEM's door. Meanwhile, it was made abundantly clear by the UNITA leadership that it had signed the Lusaka agreement only because of its recent military setbacks, which it saw as the result of mercenary intervention. Already there was talk of the need to renegotiate parts of the Protocol. At the close of its congress in Bailundo in February 1995, UNITA provided an early indication of its tactics: it gave only an alarmingly qualified approval to the Lusaka Accord, saying that it preferred under the current circumstances to take its place in parliament as an opposition party. This effectively rejected the idea of participation in government, despite the allocation of posts in the Lusaka agreement and the undertaking on the part of UNITA to respect the government's programme scrupulously - after months of detailed negotiations around these exact issues.

There was continued concern about the use of belligerent language by the military chiefs on both sides, and reports of widespread ceasefire violations, which UNAVEM was too weak to investigate with any thoroughness.

By January 1996, it appeared that an agreement was reached about the integration of forces into a new Angolan army. Doubts remained, however, about UNITA's commitment to the process. Many of its encamped fighters were either under-aged or very old, and little effective weaponry was handed in. There were increasing fears that Savimbi had decided to insure himself and his supporters against a repetition of the 1992 disaster by removing his best trained and equipped troops out of view of UNAVEM, some to protect the alluvial diamond fields upon which UNITA depended for its capacity to continue operations, others beyond the country's borders as a force in being.

In his conclusion to the UNITA conference at the beginning of 1996, Savimbi emphasised the need to begin political discussions with the government before the completion of the disarmament process. He expressed the view that the mandate of the present parliament, elected in 1992, expired on November 1996, and that it should then be replaced by a transitional Government of National Unity, which would be responsible for conducting elections in one or two years' time. Once again, this amounted to a call for a substantial revision of the Lusaka Accord of November 1994, under which UNITA was to receive a minority of posts in an MPLA-directed government.

This established a pattern of relative consistency in the behaviour of the mercurial Savimbi, who continued to make the minimum concessions necessary to avert a UN withdrawal or sanctions, while procrastinating, as far as he dared, with the integration of his military and political arm in the Luanda-dominated system. A Government of National Unity and Reconciliation was to have been formed by July 1996, then by November 1996, and finally by late January 1997. Until the first months of 1997, Savimbi managed to delay the process, either by demanding the reallocation of posts, or by insisting upon a say in policy-making, or by requiring clarification of the special status he should enjoy as leader of UNITA.

Though a Government of National Unity and Reconciliation has now come into being, its strength will be sorely tested, both by the magnitude of the socio-economic crisis confronting it, and by UNITA's continued ambivalence, and organisational schizophrenia. Having rejected one of the two vice-presidential posts once on offer and since abolished, Savimbi has recently

accepted the special status of leader of the largest opposition party, hoping to capitalise on the continued ineffectiveness of an inept and corrupt government in time to win the second round of presidential elections, due to be held within the next two years. Meanwhile, the MPLA-led government appears to have seduced the bulk of UNITA parliamentarians by introducing them to the comparative delights of official existence in the capital. Even so, many of them felt constrained to attend UNITA festivities at Bailundo over the New Year, testifying to the residual hold exercised by the movement's remarkable leader. As part of its rationale, Dembo's arrival in Luanda may well be ascribed to Savimbi's need to re-secure full control over UNITA-Luanda, in order to deny the government the opportunity of splitting the organisation in a preliminary move to deal with the 'residual' UNITA forces still under arms.

CUTTING UNITA'S SUPPLY LINES?

Throughout the Lusaka peace process, the UN placed increasing emphasis on the need to cut off the supply of weapons and other war material to Angola. In this, the UN and the troika of powers responsible for monitoring and fostering the peace process have proved less than consistent, in that suppliers from the US, Russia and Portugal all openly supplied arms and equipment to the Angolan government.

Sanctions and diplomatic pressure from the international community, though it may have gone some way to concentrate diplomatic awareness on the Angolan crisis, have not resulted in UNITA's submission. To a large degree, the sanctions introduced on 1 October 1997 have proved ineffective if they were intended to cut off the supply of war materials to UNITA. The disruption of transport routes through the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Congo-Brazzaville, following the fall of the Mobutu and Lissouba regimes, has been of greater impact. At the root of the problem is the impossibility to enforce sanctions in the light of the subterfuge by suppliers in this lucrative trade and the inability of local air forces to enforce an embargo on unauthorised air traffic.

Any consideration of the effects of an arms embargo on UNITA first has to consider the large existing stocks of war material available in the country and the region beyond. Not only is there the substantial stock of arms and ammunition supplied to the warring parties during the civil war, but there is also the continued circulation of these weapons from conflict to conflict. In other words, even were UNITA to be denied new stocks of arms from outside Africa, there are sufficient weapons in circulation elsewhere on the continent to obviate the problem, as shall be shown. A contributing factor to this situation has been the failure of the UN mandate in Angola or Mozambique to provide for the disarmament of combatants or civilians, or for the destruction of weaponry in excess of the demands of national security. Even during the operations of UNAVEM III, a situation was tolerated in which very few weapons were surrendered, and some of these were later reclaimed by UNITA cadres deserting the designated quartering areas. Certainly, the returns of weapons and the ammunition handed in, their type and quality, do nothing to suggest that UNITA's combat capability has been impaired by this exercise in any way. In military terms, the amount of arms and ammunition handed over to UNAVEM was derisory. By way of illustration, UNITA has still not surrendered any armoured fighting vehicles, and the amount of ammunition handed over would constitute less than one 10-ton truck load.

Sources for the recirculation of existing stock to UNITA involve operations which also serve the Great Lakes region. The bulk of the stocks being recirculated come from Mozambique and Zambia. Almost every insurgent movement in Southern Africa had support bases inside Zambia during their respective struggles in the 1970s and 1980s. Substantial amounts of their weaponry were cached in Zambia and left there at war's end. These operations also provided a substantial supply of new weapons and war materials via Tanzania (Dar es Salaam) and were instrumental in providing UNITA with sophisticated optical equipment (night vision) and ground-to-air shoulder launched missiles during June 1997.

There are also vast arms networks from outside Africa making their contribution to the conflict in Angola. Such networks deliver weapons from the factory to the front-line and include financiers, procurers, suppliers, middlemen, who make the deals and may arrange for the transportation, transporters, facilitators of the transshipment on national territories, and the buyers of weapons. The procurers and suppliers are usually from outside the African

continent, and are based in Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic), Asia (China, India and Pakistan) and North America (US). The middlemen are mostly based in Southern Africa (South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, the DRC, Uganda and Egypt). Most of them have very strong links with South African brokering agents and transport companies. Some of the prominent South Africans involved in supplying UNITA are Portuguese-speaking businessman with interests in South Africa and Mozambique

The movement of weapons to Angola principally involves the traffic in small arms and light weapons, as well as ammunition and landmines. During the entire course of the arms procurement and delivery process, international and domestic laws, regional embargoes, as well as government policies pertaining to import/export controls, arms transfers licensing and customs in the countries of origin and transshipment, may be violated. Since both the private arms networks and the government-sponsored procurers are aware that in the process of supplying UNITA forces they are violating domestic and international laws, they have constructed elaborate covert operations to escape public scrutiny. These include the transshipment of arms through foreign territories and the use of false bills of lading, flight plans and end-user certificates. Most of the support by South African citizens is conducted through other countries in the region. The brokering agent places the order from South Africa, and arranges for the transport through Tanzania, Zambia, the DRC, Uganda and to a lesser extent on direct flights to Angola from the supplier country. Transshipment often involves complicity on the part of the government or nationals of the country whose territory is used as a conduit for the military goods. A tried and tested technique of the arms dealers is the falsification of documents. End-user certificates or cargo manifests often indicate recipients who, in fact, turn out not to be the final beneficiary. The cargo manifests in various shipments of arms that reached UNITA via Pointe Noire (Congo-Brazzaville) in some cases listed Uganda and Rwanda, rather than UNITA, as the recipients. In other cases involving weapons transfers from sources in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, shipments have been manifested to Zaire (now the DRC), but were ultimately transported to UNITA bases inside Zaire and Angola. Most of these bases, especially those in the Kapanga and Dilolo areas, still receive goods from all over Africa. In order to conceal the final destination of arms deliveries or the sensitive nature of a weapons cargo, traders have filed false flight plans, disguised arms as humanitarian cargo, and exploited loopholes in the customs controls of the supplying or transit countries. In the recent past, air cargo companies have transported mixed cargo of relief aid and weapons to Angolan refugee camps in north-western Zambia.

The networks that supply weapons overlap with wider networks that cater to the demand for weapons in Africa, as well as on other continents. Similarly, networks operating out of Belgium are alleged to have transferred weapons from the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe to Burundi, the Hutu rebel forces based in the eastern DRC and UNITA. The activities of this Belgium-based supplier stretch as far as Afghanistan, where it has found clients in different military factions in the civil war.

The origin of the arms and equipment trafficked through various pipelines to UNITA included large stocks available in eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as well as from some western European producers. The particular roles of Belgium and France in the arms traffic and supply to Central Africa and Angola need more specific research in the future, as do supply and procurement activities elsewhere in Europe.

UNITA continues to receive weapons over land via Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia, by air into Zambia, and to its major logistical bases at Jamba, Cazombo, Andulo and Lusamba. Most of these flights are from Central and Southern African states, including South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, the DRC and further afield.

A connection to UNITA also developed that involved certain Zairian nationals, including figures close to the late President Mobutu. This operation also involves the smuggling of diamonds and gold from UNITA-held territory to Antwerp via Zambia and Burundi. A recent publication by Human Rights Watch confirmed this two-way traffic of diamonds exiting through Bujumbura, to Antwerp in exchange for arms.

Though much of the weaponry supplied to UNITA originates from outside Africa, a special mention should be made of the indigenous arms industry, which also sustains the UNITA war effort. Although most governments with their own weapons and manufacturing capability will deny support to UNITA, the corruption prevailing in most of these states makes verification and control almost impossible. The South African arms industry has considerable experience in outflanking embargoes and scrutiny, and this is convenient in keeping its business profitable. Furthermore, arms suppliers have supported UNITA for almost seventeen years, before it was outlawed. At present individuals connected to the South African arms industry are using their vast contacts on the international arms market to broker arms deals for UNITA. Most of the dealing and supply takes place outside South Africa, and thus renders government control regimes ineffective.

Weapons, including landmines and ammunition, are produced in the Nakasongola arms factory, a Chinese-built arms production facility in the Gulu area of northern Uganda. This facility provides ammunition and weapons to the Burundian government and Tutsi militias. According to press reports in May 1997, South African arms dealers have bought substantial amounts of ammunition from this factory, and delivered it from Entebbe airport directly to UNITA. Although Nakasongola officials strongly denied that the ammunition were for use by UNITA, they failed to produce end-user certificates or any other official documentation for the sale. They did acknowledge, however, that the sale took place.

Zimbabwean Defence Industries (ZDI) are also involved in supplying rebel groups and local warring factions with arms and ammunition in the region. Vast amounts of stocks were provided to the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) during its campaign to overthrow the Mobutu regime in Zaire. According to recent press reports, they will also provide equipment and ammunition to the DRC defence forces, to the amount of US \$500 million. In the months immediately preceding the AFDL's gallop through Zaire, AK-47 ammunition was difficult to obtain on the black market in the region. Shortly after the ZDI supply to the AFDL, this ammunition also entered the black market in large quantities, and substantial stocks were available for illicit sale in Zambia and Congo-Brazzaville. It would be possible, therefore, for UNITA to purchase its ammunition locally and from a local manufacturer.

UNITA'S ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURES

UNITA force levels are difficult to determine. UNITA bases, other than those in the Cuando Cubango and Moxico provinces, change frequently and are also difficult to identify with any precision. Although great care has been taken in compiling the list of UNITA bases as they have been reported in the press during the past seven months, corrections may be required in the near future.

Quando Cubango Province

The Cuando Cubango Province has been, and still is the traditional stronghold of UNITA. The war headquarters of UNITA was built at Jamba in the late 1970s, and subsequently developed into a substantial logistical support base with its own airstrip and infrastructure. After the signing of the Bicesse Accords, UNITA opted to move its headquarters closer to Luanda and developed the Bailundo/Andulo facility in the Huambo Province, which became the political capital of the movement. Military bases in the Cuando Cubango province are still in use, and remained in use through both the Bicesse and Lusaka peace processes. Recent reports (mid-January 1998) indicate that UNITA is revamping the Jamba base. The aim might be to move the headquarters from Bailundo and Andulo back to Jamba. This is surely bad news for the peace process, and might indicate that UNITA is preparing to revert to a guerrilla campaign against the MPLA government in the near future.

Moxico Province

The Moxico Province encompasses the bulk of Angola's border with Zambia, and has developed into one of the movement's major logistical centres. UNITA bases in this province include Ninanda, Matete, Lumbala, Cazombo, Lucusse and Lumeje. Smaller bases are Matunga, Kamundelu, Litapuya, Chauvuma, Macondo Camau and Tambo. Major logistical support facilities and 'refugee camps' of the movement were established inside north-western

Zambia, and became increasingly important to UNITA's survival in the second half of 1997. By far the most important facility inside Zambia was near the town of Zambezi. Its airstrip and storage facilities were handling the bulk of UNITA's provisions until fairly recently. Other facilities of importance to UNITA's survival inside Zambia are those at Kalene and Mwinilunga. Following recent press allegations that a number of prominent Zambians were profiting from the UNITA support networks, and repeated warnings from Luanda that this must cease, UNITA support structures appear to have been moved deeper into Zambian territory. Joint investigations by Angolan and Zambian security forces would indicate that the use of Zambian facilities west of the Zambezi River has been discontinued.

Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul

UNITA's activities in the Lunda provinces centre mainly around its diamond mining. A substantial amount of UNITA's forces are deployed in the Lundas to protect diamond mines. Most of these forces are attached to specific mines, and operate in conjunction with private security companies responsible for protecting these assets. Two large training camps, situated at Cambungo and Saucula, were training new recruits for the movement's 'mining police'. The UNITA 'Shadow Force', said to have been under the command of General Dembo, has deployed in bases inside the DRC, bordering the Lunda Sul Province. Base areas are between Kapanga and Sandoa in the DRC, and the force is estimated at 5 000. Recent additions from former FAZ (the previous Zairian Army) and Interhamwe rebels may have increased the numbers. According to most analysts, this force is currently in the last stages of its training cycle, and may be introduced into the Lundas, or the Moxico Province, by the end of the rainy season.

PROSPECTS FOR ARMED CONFLICT IN ANGOLA

UNITA has still to comply fully with the terms of the Lusaka Accord and seems unlikely to commit itself unreservedly to the peace process, all public protestations to the contrary. The movement appears to have split, to all intents and purposes, with those in Luanda resigned to make the best of a bad deal. Dembo's arrival in Luanda, however, may re-instill discipline and deference to Savimbi's will. As has been shown, UNITA continues to restock and resupply, principally, though not exclusively, through Zambia despite international embargoes. The interruption of routes through Congo-Brazzaville and parts of the DRC has narrowed but not exhausted UNITA's military options. Militarily, UNITA has adopted a defensive posture, and seems to be reactivating its military headquarters at Jamba, though UNITA would certainly not wish to initiate armed conflict. Savimbi and the militants, meanwhile, continue to try the patience of the Angolan military, daring it to take them on in hostile territory, and with UN observers still present. Following the logistical problems caused by the effective loss of Pointe Noire (Congo-Brazzaville) as a major depository for resupply, UNITA also appears to be playing for time, possibly to move men and supplies southwards from Andulo and Bailundo, to re-establish its headquarters at Jamba in the south-east. An alternative strategy would be to strengthen UNITA's military defences around the Bailundo-Andulo region in expectation of a government attack from Huambo.

UNITA repeatedly dribbles out concessions to persuade the UN Security Council that it is worth prolonging the mandate, but there must come a time when the Angolan Army simply decides enough is enough. The problem for Luanda would then be to find an adequate *causis belli* to justify a change of approach to the international community. In the meantime, UNITA will justify its delays by focusing the attention on the government's failure to disarm the civilian population, 700 000 of whom are said to have been issued with weapons in 1992.

With the end of the rainy season, the physical obstacles to large scale military operations have diminished. The UN waits upon another report from the Secretary-General in mid-April, but is eager to find the justification for withdrawing most of its mission, leaving only an infantry company and support until July.

Despite the much-publicised re-equipment of the Angolan armed forces, doubts remain about their logistical and maintenance capability. There are also some indications that morale may be brittle in some key units. Any operations against thoroughly defended UNITA positions would be difficult to sustain for long periods, and the prospect of an offensive rolling up

UNITA's defences is remote. Should the anticipated offensive prove costly or even disastrous, the consequences for Luanda would be dire.

Even assuming that the anticipated offensive would be successful, to the extent that Jamba would fall, this would probably not bring hostilities to a close. A hardline remnant of UNITA would then initiate a protracted guerrilla campaign, reactivating the numerous small bases and supply caches it has in the east of the country and across the border in the DRC and Zambia.

It may be argued that this continuation of the war would serve little purpose, even from the extreme UNITA viewpoint, but, in fact, the hardliners who surround Savimbi have little to gain from throwing themselves upon the mercy of Luanda - many of them barely escaped the massacres of 1992 with their lives and may also believe that, eventually, the internal political situation in Luanda itself will compel their enemy to seek less than total victory. The regional situation, too, at present so adverse to UNITA, is a fluid one. Laurent Kabila's hold, even over Kinshasa, is tenuous, his erstwhile international allies are ambivalent, and there are many elements hostile to him who may form alliances of convenience with UNITA. The circumstances in Congo-Brazzaville are similar: the situation of Denis Sassou-Nguesso, a northerner, is far from assured, since he is forced to operate in a part of the country where northern dominance is resented. The activities of his militia suggest that they may barely be under control, and this will aggravate the situation. At present Angolan forces are providing essential security services in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire, but this would also recommend UNITA to Sassou-Nguesso's numerous opponents.

The point is that, even though an avoidance of hostilities or an early capitulation may seem to make sense to dispassionate outsiders, there are straws to be grasped, and it is likely that desperate men will make the effort.

Depending on the fortunes of war (a phrase that has more than one meaning in the Angolan context), and the health of the president, a matter for intense speculation in the hive of rumour that is Luanda, this year could also see a three-way competition for influence, between the soldiers, the presidential palace, and members of the MPLA who have long since lost patience with the corrupt and ineffective bunch around the Funtungu Palace. Recent oil discoveries in the deepwater concessions could provide a solid base for the economic resurrection of Angola, but only if these are supervised by able and committed people. The time may now have come for elements in the political élite whose vision stretches further than the bank vaults of Switzerland to put a stop to the looting of the national inheritance. Should President dos Santos become incapacitated or worse, the constitution provides for him to be succeeded by the President of the National Assembly, but also stipulates that a new election be held within three months. This could very well figure in Savimbi's calculations, and will also be in the minds of the commanders of the FAA advocating a military solution.

By the same token, the authorities must be aware that the most serious blow they could deal to UNITA would be to remove its top structure, a point which is not lost on Savimbi and his generals.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

Scenario One

The government eventually loses patience with UNITA and launches an offensive, initially against 'armed band', and subsequently against UNITA bases and strongholds.

- The government offensive is successful and UNITA's military capacity is effectively destroyed, leaving the militants no option but to make what they can of a peace deal.
- The government offensive bogs down, leading to a protracted struggle in which neither side is able to strike the decisive blow.
- UNITA inflicts a decisive defeat upon the Angolan Army and government control over a number of areas is relinquished, leading to a revision of the terms of the Lusaka Protocol.

Scenario Two

The Government of National Unity and Reconciliation continues to operate, with the participation of some members of UNITA-Luanda, but with Savimbi standing outside as putative leader of the opposition and prospective president-in-waiting. The co-operation of UNITA and MPLA members is facilitated by the latter's theoretical adoption of a free-market orientation and by the distribution of a share of the profits of office, and as a result of UNITA's difficulty in formulating a coherent alternative policy line. From outside the formal structures of government, however, there is growing disquiet about the government's inability to address the deepening socio-economic crisis, short of imposing austerity measures which bring the urban poor to the verge of revolt. From here the scenario fragments:

- Dos Santos' grip on the party is weakened by internal dissent and his own failing health. A new group of technocrats emerges drawing on both UNITA and MPLA parliamentarians and followers, who decide to approach the country's problems with determination and consistency. In this task, they are able to point to the discoveries of vast new oil reserves in the deep-sea fields, and secure the necessary support of international donors and agencies. Savimbi is increasingly marginalised, and the new centrist alliance is able to win elections, ousting the old war parties. This is obviously an outcome to be hoped for, and seems possible, given luck. A key player in all this would be the MPLA Secretary-General, Lopo do Nascimento.
- The Government of National Unity and Reconciliation is totally overwhelmed by socio-economic problems and urban unrest. The military steps in to restore order and becomes the dominant force in government, clearing out the corrupt and despised politicians of the old order. Having taken over Luanda, it turns to take over the diamond fields still under Savimbi's control, and to secure the victory that it was denied by the Lusaka Accords. A protracted low-intensity war in the Lunda Norte Province ensues. The task of national rehabilitation is further delayed by the need to increase military expenditures. A new technocratic government eventually emerges, under military sponsorship.
- The Government of National Unity and Reconciliation struggles ineffectually and unconvincingly with Angola's socio-economic problems in the face of growing discontent. Savimbi returns from splendid isolation to seize victory in the presidential elections. This triggers another round of fighting as the armed forces and the vested interests in Luanda are unable to contemplate the consequences of his political programme. From here it is difficult to project a further outcome, except to say that the odds would still be stacked in Luanda's favour, especially given the withdrawal of much vital foreign support for Savimbi. This scenario does not seem all that probable or likely.

CONCLUSION

Given the extent of both the human and material destruction in Angola over the past thirty years, it would seem unwise to expect that, even were peace to hold, recovery would be swift. For all its untapped natural wealth, this is not a country comparable with post-1945 Germany in terms of its residual human skills. Nor is there a Marshall Plan in prospect. The focus should be on 'building' a country rather than rebuilding it. In some respects this is a catch-22 situation: without some form of economic recovery in the countryside, the incentive to seek peace is relatively slight, yet without a commitment to peace there can be no recovery.