

Savimbi retains a 3000 strong force for his "personal security", sporadic fighting has continued, and the general security situation has worsened following a rise in demobilized soldiers turning to crime in order to support themselves. The United Nations has attempted to use economic sanctions to force UNITA to return to the fold of the peace agreement, but it appears that both UNITA and the government have been using the recent cease-fire to rearm themselves in preparation for continued offensives.

Conflict Resolution Initiatives:

The Angolan-Namibian Accords

Post-independence Angola found itself on the Cold War frontier between the US and the USSR, being pushed and pulled as each super power sought to ensure the creation of an Angolan government that was favourable to its interests. The first concerted efforts to resolve the conflict came about as part of the US grand strategy of bringing democratic transition to South Africa. In order to bring independence to the South African administered territory of Namibia, the US first had to work to remove Cuban troops from Angola. The conflict in Angola and Namibia were intimately linked. UNITA received support from the South African government as well as the US. The MPLA was backed by the USSR and Cuba. The Namibian independence movement, the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), had its bases in southern Angola and received support from the MPLA. South Africa itself supported UNITA with both money and troops as it considered the deployment of Cuban forces and the threat of communism as a threat to its national interests. Thus US efforts became focused initially on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. This withdrawal was supervised by the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I).

The removal of the Cuban threat then made South African amenable to settlement of the Namibian question and a gradual transition to independence for this territory became possible in December 1988. This overall settlement process was led by the US which mediated both between Angola and South Africa in the initial stages of the process, with the later inclusion of Cuba once the issue of Cuban forces became the key to the peace settlement.

The negotiation process itself began in 1983 and lasted until the eventual signing of the Angolan-Namibian Accords in December 1988. The first initial agreement that was reached occurred in 1984 with the signing of the Lusaka Accord between South Africa and Angola. South Africa agreed to withdraw its forces from Angola in return for the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Cunene province in the south of Angola. A series of unproductive talks then occurred over the next four years. Finally, in January 1988, discussions in Luanda led to agreement on the total withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as part of an overall settlement. In addition, the superpowers jointly pledged their support for Namibian independence and supported the withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. This process culminated nearly a year later when a bilateral Angolan-Cuban agreement was signed regarding troop withdrawal and a tripartite agreement was signed between South Africa, Angola, and Cuba concerning the overall settlement in southwest Africa. It was at this point that the UN agreed to deploy the UNAVEM I mission.