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### NCSEER NOTE

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## SUMMARY\*

This paper supplements two earlier reports by the author, The Evolution of Soviet Perspectives on Third World Security (distributed on 2/19/92), and The Evolution of Soviet Perspectives on African Politics (distributed on 3/15/92), and further particularizes his analysis by concentrating on Soviet-Angolan relations. A detailed account of those relations from about 1970 to the late 1980's serves almost as a case study in support of the principal conclusion of his previous two papers - that the Soviet shift from an aggressively forward, ideological, confrontational and optimistic posture to much the opposite was not tactical, and not prompted exclusively by extraneous constraints and interests, but was importantly a product of learning from African realities and Soviet experience with them, and is therefore lasting. While already dated and overtaken by larger events, this paper provides not only a useful summary of two critical decades in recent Soviet-Angolan relations, but perhaps also a litmus for Russian Federation policies, including those presumably pursued by Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in his recent trip to Angola and South Africa.

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\* Prepared by NCSEER staff

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## SOVIET-ANGOLAN RELATIONS, 1975-1990<sup>1</sup>

S. Neil MacFarlane

### **I. Introduction**

This chapter assesses the developing relationship between the People's Republic of Angola and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The relationship has been significant in a number of respects. In geopolitical terms, Angola gave the USSR increased access to the southern African region in a period of great instability and change there. This enhanced the USSR's political and military presence in proximity to South Africa, the richest and most developed state in southern Africa. Access to Angola allowed the USSR to play a more substantial role in support of the activities of the African National Congress (ANC) and Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). The ANC in the late 1970s and 1980s based a significant portion of its military training activities in Angola. SWAPO operated against targets in Namibia almost exclusively from Angola after 1976.

At another level, the victory of the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA) in Angola and the Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique (FRELIMO) in Mozambique in 1974-75 presented the first real opportunity for operationalizing the vanguard party/socialist orientation approach to cementing ties with African radical regimes.<sup>2</sup> Of the two, the Angolan experience was the more significant, given the deeper pre-liberation ties between the MPLA and the USSR,<sup>3</sup> the much higher priority placed by the Soviets on the relationship with Angola, and the greater level of influence enjoyed by the USSR over the period in that country.

In assessing the development of this relationship, I ask a number of questions. First, what did the Soviets want and expect in their relationship with Angola? Second, to what extent did the relationship satisfy these expectations? And third, to what extent and in what ways did their experience in Angola cause them to redefine their expectations and policies? Or, to put it another way, what did they learn from their experience?<sup>4</sup>

In this context, I take learning to mean lasting change -- produced by experience -- in the way that people or groups interpret and respond to external events. As such, it is distinct

from tactical adjustment. It is my presumption that in the Soviet case, learning involves the weakening of the influence (on theory and practice) of more dogmatic and *a priori* aspects of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history and politics and a corresponding increase in the significance of practical realities in the Soviet approach to regional problems. Given that ideological principles of interpretation frequently distort as much as they reveal, this favors more rational and effective policy.<sup>5</sup> Change in Soviet policy toward Angola may be accounted for in part in terms of tactical adjustments to changing external variables (e.g., increasing American self-assertion in the Third World under the Reagan administration), or of deepening domestic constraints (e.g., the resource allocation problem), or as a reflection of a broader shift in the direction and change in the intensity of Soviet policy toward the Third World as a whole. But this evolution also shows considerable sensitivity toward and adaptation as a result of regional realities. Soviet policy toward Angola shows an increasing appreciation of what is possible in a volatile regional environment, and a corresponding scaling down of policy objectives in the region.

## II. Objectives

The USSR's policy toward Angola in 1975-85 suggests that policymakers entertained an array of objectives:

1. The expansion and consolidation of influence at the expense of the United States, other Western powers, and China.
2. The enhancement of Soviet status and role in the international relations of Africa.
3. The promotion of socialist-oriented transformation in Africa.
4. The improvement of the capacity of the Soviet military to operate in southern Africa and neighboring seas.
5. The acquisition of economic assets of use to the USSR.

The fact that the military returns in the relationship with Angola were minimal (Soviet intelligence-gathering aircraft had limited rights to use the Luanda Airport while Soviet naval vessels docked at Angolan ports) while the costs of the relationship continued to grow

suggests that force projection was a secondary objective. Similarly, the fact that Angola constituted a net economic burden to the USSR suggests that economic objectives were not a major determinant in Soviet policy there.

Basic Soviet diplomatic, political, and ideological objectives *vis-à-vis* Angola may be categorized in terms of transformation, acquisition, denial, and avoidance goals. The USSR sought to validate its claim to leadership of the world revolutionary process, and to possession of a universally applicable model of social, political, and economic development through the promotion of revolutionary change. The USSR also sought to acquire an enhanced diplomatic and political position in the region by securing influence over regional actors and through recognition of the Soviet role as a player in regional affairs. The reverse side of this coin was an effort to reduce American and Western influence and stature in the region. When established revolutionary regimes enjoying close ties to the USSR or Soviet positions of influence were at risk, the USSR sought to minimize losses. Soviet policymakers pursued these objectives in the broader and constraining context of an effort to avoid confrontation or significant damage to the relationship with the United States over regional issues.

The priority accorded these various objectives has varied over time. Soviet policy in the mid-1970s tended to focus on the more ambitious end of the scale -- establishing new positions of influence, effecting socialist-oriented transformation, and promoting the process of national liberation. As a result of their accumulated experience in the region, in addition to the changes which have taken place within the USSR since 1982, Soviet policymakers tended to place an increasing emphasis on sustaining established positions and their role in the region while reducing the significance of regional competition on the superpower relationship, and cutting the material costs of their associations with regional actors. Most recently, Soviet policymakers appear to have placed less emphasis on the sustaining of ties to traditional friends. They are looking for ways to disengage honorably from the security affairs of the region through the promotion of peaceful settlements to disputes involving these friends, and display increasing interest in concrete economic benefit from whatever residual relationships remain with actors in the region.

From 1975 to 1988, the Soviets relied strongly on cooperation with Cuba in the

pursuit of their objectives in Angola. Cuba also had a particular agenda in southern Africa. It was not entirely congruent with that of the USSR. Cuban objectives appeared to comprehend a genuine desire to further the process of national liberation in southern Africa, to deepen ties with similarly inclined regimes in the Third World, to assert Cuban leadership in the Third World and by extension to enhance its position in the nonaligned movement, and to improve bargaining power in their own relationship with the USSR by providing goods which were useful to the Soviets.<sup>6</sup> Although there was a significant degree of compatibility between Soviet and Cuban objectives, there was also considerable room for divergence. Cuban pursuit of the agenda of national liberation was less sensitive to the issue of superpower relations than was the USSR's. The quest for prestige in the nonaligned movement may have led the Cubans into postures regarding southern Africa that were more confrontational than those adopted or desired by the USSR. As shall be seen below, the Cubans and Soviets clashed repeatedly on questions of policy and strategy in Angola. Historically, the Cubans enjoyed a more continuous and closer relationship with the MPLA than did the USSR.

The presence of a third and generally sympathetic party in the relationship gave the Angolans a degree of space and flexibility in the pursuit of objectives again only partly congruent with those of the USSR. In particular, the MPLA's survival, unlike that of the CPSU, was and is at stake in the civil and regional conflicts in southern Africa. The historical record considered below suggests that this concern with survival and political consolidation conflicted with Soviet policies designed to expand influence, limit the extent of the US role in the region, and further the revolutionary process at the expense of South Africa. More recently, the same considerations have conflicted with the Soviet desire to achieve political settlement through national reconciliation. The triangularity of the relationship with the USSR and Cuba conferred a degree of autonomy on Angola in regional politics. This, in turn, limited the extent to which more ambitious Soviet objectives could be realized and contributed to the gradual redefinition of Soviet priorities.



### III. Interstate Relations, 1976-80

After the MPLA's victory in the Angolan war of 1975-76, the Soviets set about the construction of a strong, multifaceted relationship with the new Angolan state. The declaration signed by the two countries during Lopo do Nascimento's visit to the USSR in May of 1976 envisaged broad Soviet-Angolan cooperation in the diplomatic, economic, technical, and security spheres.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the joint expression of solidarity with the struggles for liberation in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa<sup>8</sup> suggests some contemplation of collaboration in support of liberation movements active in those countries. This emerged reasonably rapidly in the provision of bases and training for the ANC and SWAPO on Angolan territory, and in increases in Soviet assistance to these movements.<sup>9</sup> As time passed, the two states signed a plethora of accords involving everything from fishing to exchanges among political officers of the two armed forces. They also concluded a treaty of friendship and cooperation which encompassed articles on mutual consultation in the event of "situations arising which create a threat to peace or a breach of the peace," "with a view to coordinating their positions in the interests of eliminating the threat that has arisen or restoring peace," as well as (Article 10) provisions for continuing development of military cooperation in the interest of strengthening the defense capabilities of the contracting parties.<sup>10</sup> The deterrent intent of the treaty in the context of joint Soviet-Angolan and Cuban promotion of insurgent challenges to South Africa and Namibia was clearly underlined in subsequent commentary by Soviet Africanists:

The Soviet Union displays full solidarity with the liberation struggle of the patriots of southern Africa and with the firm course of support for these patriots pursued by the "front line" states. With one of these -- Angola -- the Soviet Union is linked by a friendship and cooperation treaty. Neither the racists nor their Western patrons ought to forget this.<sup>11</sup>

Soviet media cast the significance of the victory in Angola as evidence of a substantial change in the correlation of forces which greatly weakened the positions of imperialism<sup>12</sup> and "hasten[ed] the day of the complete and final eradication of colonialism and racism on African soil."<sup>13</sup> The record suggests considerable confidence in the permanence of the victory in Angola, a belief that this victory was to be followed by further gains elsewhere in

southern Africa, that Angola was a useful forward base for efforts to promote further gains, and that there existed a solid basis for the development of a close Soviet-Angolan relationship in which the USSR could determine the broad outlines of Angolan domestic and foreign policy.

Angolan behavior even at this early date, however, shows a desire to limit the extent of their cooperation with the USSR. The Angolans were quick to announce that nonalignment was the basis of the new state's foreign policy and to insert into their constitution a clause prohibiting the establishment of foreign bases on their soil.<sup>14</sup> In comments on external assistance to Angola, they were persistently careful to couple expressions of gratitude to the USSR with similar sentiments *vis-à-vis* Cuba, as if to underline that the USSR was not their sole, nor even most significant source of support. Where the Angolans judged their immediate interests to conflict with the general lines of Soviet perspectives and policies toward the region they went their own way. For example, despite Soviet views on the role of Western private capital and on the participation of Third World states in the international capitalist economy (see chapter 1), Angola continued to welcome foreign oil and diamond companies to exploit Angolan natural resources. Despite Soviet opposition to Western efforts to mediate the continuing conflicts in Namibia and Zimbabwe, the Angolans cooperated during the same period in the Contact Group initiative on Namibia.<sup>15</sup>

It was perhaps events such as these, and the independence of perspective which they displayed, which led the Soviets into what was perhaps the most serious crisis in Soviet-Angolan relations. The efforts of Neto loyalists to consolidate their power at the expense of more radical elements of the MPLA and of more or less autonomous organs of "people's power" had dominated much of 1975-76. In this effort they were assisted by Nito Alves and José Jacinto Van Dunem, two leading MPLA members who had spent the years of the liberation struggle inside Angola, rather than in exile. Alves and Van Dunem took advantage of the neutralization of other groups to expand their own power and position in party and government structures, and particularly in the "mass organizations," the Luanda regional committee of the MPLA, the political administration of the armed forces, and in Alves' own Ministry of Internal Administration.

This activity provoked a concerted campaign against factionalism in the MPLA, beginning at the 23-29 October meeting of the MPLA Central Committee. The Committee decided to abolish Van Dunem's ministry. In May of the following year, Alves and Van Dunem were removed from the Central Committee and apparently arrested. This in turn led to an attempted coup on May 27, 1977.

The coup was suppressed, though with substantial losses at high levels of the MPLA apparatus. What is interesting from our perspective is the Soviet and Cuban role in the affair. Cuban support for Neto never wavered. Cuban troops assisted Neto loyalists in putting it down.<sup>16</sup> The Soviet role, by contrast, is somewhat obscure. There is good reason to believe that the Soviets knew of the coup in advance, and that they failed to warn Neto, presumably in the hope that his successor would be more pliable. In any event, the MPLA leadership perceived some degree of Soviet complicity.<sup>17</sup> Although both Soviet and Angolan spokesmen were at pains to underline the continuing closeness of the relationship, this no doubt reinforced the MPLA's historically grounded sense of Soviet unreliability, and occasioned a fairly significant deterioration in the Soviet-Angolan relationship during the last years of the 1970s.<sup>18</sup>

The MPLA was "transformed" at the end of 1977 into a "vanguard party." Andrei Kirilenko, the chief Soviet representative at the new party's first congress lauded this step as the most important aspect of the process of political consolidation and development along the path of socialist orientation.<sup>19</sup> As it happened, however, Neto employed this device as a means of strengthening his own control over the party and limiting the power of other factions.<sup>20</sup> Angolan perceptions of the USSR by the end of the decade are perhaps best indicated by the rumor that circulated at the time of Neto's death in 1979 (in Moscow) to the effect that the Soviets had decided to get rid of him.

Angolan flexibility in this period was increased by the relatively low level of UNITA and South African military activity inside Angola.<sup>21</sup> However, it was constrained by the unwillingness of the US government to contemplate normalization of relations and by residual dependence on the link to the USSR as a deterrent against potential actions by South Africa and the United States.<sup>22</sup>

By the end of the 1970s, the Soviets faced a rather mixed balance sheet in their

relations with Angola. They had gained some regional prestige from their intervention on behalf of, and their subsequent support for, the MPLA regime. The intervention had also resulted in some embarrassment to the United States. The USSR had obtained a venue from which it was possible to render more effective assistance to SWAPO and the ANC.

Yet there were significant costs as well. Soviet/Cuban intervention in the Angolan war damaged the East-West relationship substantially.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, the economic situation worsened considerably after liberation, partly as a result of the war and the subsequent low-level insurgency, but also due to the disorganization of the state sector and excessively rapid and ambitious nationalization. An examination of official economic statistics for a sample of manufactured goods in 1973 and 1980 provides eloquent testimony.

**Table 1. Angolan Industrial Production**<sup>24</sup>

Consumer Goods	1973	1980
Maize Flour (tons)	62,000	57,308
Sugar (tons)	82,000	25,217
Vegetable Oil (1,000 liters)	16,750	4,847
Footwear (1000 pairs)	3,400	737
Bicycle Assemblies	36,518	6,919
Blankets	972,000	238,517
Intermediate Goods	1973	1980
Plywood (cubic meters)	13,517	2,861
Tires	359,000	87,086

There were some exceptions to this general decline (e.g., slight increases in textile production and a substantial increase in the production of assembled radios and televisions). Moreover, the raw materials sector (oil and diamonds in particular) continued to produce

substantial output for export. But the general decline in the domestic economy is unmistakable. The 1980 figures cited above refer principally to state sector production. This suggests that the "noncapitalist path" was in trouble. Performance in agriculture was similarly disastrous, as is evident from the following table of statistics on domestically produced agricultural goods marketed through state-controlled outlets.

**Table 2. Angolan Agricultural Production for Market**

PRODUCT	1977	1979	1981
	Plan   Actual	Plan   Actual	Plan   Actual
Wheat	5,600   3,450	11,590   1,261	---   210
Maize	50,500   36,788	161,660   19,262	92,078   23,649
Cassava	120,000   1,141	51,900   7,502	35,706   19,027
Vegetables	---   3,352	54,200   10,023	51,533   27,703
Cotton	6,000   1,423	21,320   1,633	10,470   1,046
Beef	19,070   3,409	17,500   6,213	12,169   3,409
Chicken	7,209   3,550	4,820   1,223	9,818   427

Note: All figures are in metric tons.

The general picture from official figures is one of overall decline in state-controlled production, though with some exceptions (e.g., cassava), and systematic and staggering underfulfillment of plan targets. The result of shrinking production and massive urbanization was an increasing reliance on imports of both food and other consumer goods. The net effect of this was an increasing need for economic assistance (given that export revenues tended to be absorbed by the defense sector), and this at a time when growth in Soviet output was falling dramatically.

Soviet aid to Angola during 1975-79 reflects the extent to which domestic economic stringency limited the USSR's capacity and will to make good Angola's miserable economic performance. A CIA report in 1980 termed this assistance minuscule.<sup>25</sup> Trade activity was not much more inspiring. In 1979, Western Europe provided 56.4% of Angolan imports and absorbed 28.5% of Angolan exports. In the same year the analogous figures for North America were 5.6% and 21.4%. The CMEA countries, by contrast, provided 15.7% of imports and took 6.9% of exports. The figures for 1980 showed a marginal increase in CMEA imports and decrease in CMEA exports in total Angolan trade share.<sup>26</sup>

These figures raise serious doubts about the capacity of the socialist community to fuel the process of economic development in Angola. Similar conclusions suggest themselves in the field of technical cooperation. As the CIA pointed out in its 1980 report, the 9,000 communist bloc technicians in Angola could hardly compensate for the departure of 100,000 Portuguese.<sup>27</sup> In conjunction with the prominent role of Western multinationals' production in the oil and diamond sectors,<sup>28</sup> these figures also raised serious questions about the wisdom of Soviet prescriptions concerning the elimination of foreign capital from socialist-oriented countries and the displacement of the "international capitalist division of labor" with its socialist counterpart. The outright exploitative character of trading and co-production ties that did develop between the USSR and Angola (as in fishing) did little to suggest that even if an "international socialist division of labor" could emerge, it would be any better than the "neocolonial" nature of capitalist trading and investment practices.<sup>29</sup>

The failure of the USSR to establish a meaningful presence in the Angolan economy, coupled with the catastrophic and continuing decline of production activity in Angola (as well as the growing Angolan disaffection with the USSR) meant that the Soviet Union had to rely increasingly on military instruments in its effort to sustain the position won in Angola in 1975-76. In this they were assisted by the resumption of significant UNITA activity and direct South African military interference in Angola in 1979-81, and by the advent of an American administration which pursued "constructive engagement" with South Africa, and which was populated by many individuals favoring support of insurgencies against Third World socialist-oriented regimes having close ties with the USSR.

#### IV. Civil War and Foreign Intervention, 1980-88

The war of the 1980s falls into four phases:

1. The growing pressure on the MPLA leading to the Lusaka Accords of 1984.
2. The escalation of the internal conflict in 1985-87, as Angola attempted to use growing amounts of weaponry in conventional assaults against UNITA positions; first in the Cazombo Salient and subsequently in southeastern Angola.
3. The Angolan-Cuban-Soviet escalation in 1988, which was arguably the decisive factor in bringing South Africa to accept the independence of Namibia and to fully withdraw from Angola in December 1988.
4. The ongoing internal war between the MPLA and UNITA since December 1988.

##### A. 1980-84

The first period began at the end of the 1970s, when UNITA reemerged as an effective insurgent force inside Angola. Although UNITA had never completely disappeared after the South African withdrawal of March 1976, it had been more or less effectively contained in the southernmost provinces of Angola (Cuando Cubango and to a lesser extent Cunene). There was some sabotage along the Benguela Railroad (the principal exit to the Atlantic for Zairean and Zambian minerals in better times), mainly east of Bie, but traffic continued to flow. In 1979, however, UNITA consolidated its control over the Jamba area, establishing a reasonably secure base within Angola.<sup>30</sup> The rate of sabotage along the railroad increased markedly, effectively closing the line. In 1982, UNITA moved north of the railroad in force, jeopardizing Angolan diamond extraction. The northward expansion of UNITA was facilitated by South African training and logistical support.<sup>31</sup> The poor performance of the Angolan armed forces (FAPLA) in counterinsurgency warfare, the manifest weakness of Angolan governmental structures, and the deepening alienation of the rural population of central and eastern Angola contributed to UNITA's success.

The second component of the growing threat to Angola was an increase in direct South African military pressure. Again, South African incursions into southern Angola had

never entirely disappeared. South African forces raided repeatedly across the border in the late 1970s, ostensibly against SWAPO units and installations. The culmination of this activity was the raid on Kassinga in October 1978.<sup>32</sup> But the activity was sporadic and temporary.

This changed in the 1980s, despite reasonably cordial South African discussions in 1979 about functional issues of mutual concern -- e.g., the Ruacana Falls Dam and offshore drilling along the Angolan-Namibian frontier. In September of 1981, the South African Defense Forces (SADF) attacked well into Cunene Province, capturing a Soviet adviser in the process, and establishing a substantial military presence along the frontier, within Angola. This persisted until 1984. The South Africans supplemented this seizure of a buffer with acts of sabotage much deeper within Angola, the most damaging of which was the November 1981 commando assault on the Luanda oil refinery. This suggested an escalation in South African objectives well beyond their earlier declaratory purpose of harassing SWAPO to what amounted effectively to the paralysis of Angola as a whole.

Throughout this period, the USSR reaffirmed their commitments under the treaty of friendship to give Angola "the necessary support to resist pressures from the imperialist powers."<sup>33</sup> Very little was said, however, about the August-September 1981 South African invasion. The Soviet broadcast media tended to report the positions of others rather than commenting directly.<sup>34</sup> The joint statement on the occasion of the first high-level Angolan army delegation to the USSR after the South African incursion stressed the particularly dangerous nature of the growing aggressiveness of South Africa, linked it to US imperialism, and then condemned the aggression and demanded an immediate withdrawal.<sup>35</sup> In noting the "barbarous aggression by the racist regime," Soviet commentators expressed their "fraternal solidarity with the people of Angola, firmly standing on guard over the gains of the revolution."<sup>36</sup> This is a far cry from the earlier cited warning that the Soviet-Angolan treaty, and the security commitments therein, constituted a significant deterrent to South African rapacity.

This tepid response is reflected also in Soviet arms transfer behavior. An examination of Table 3 (section B) shows only a modest increase in Soviet arms transfers to deal with the deteriorating security situation in Angola. This may have reflected Soviet



unwillingness to get more deeply involved or Angolan incapacity or unwillingness to pay.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 3. The Angolan Military, 1980-1990**<sup>38</sup>

### A. Capabilities

Year	Personnel	Tanks <sup>1</sup>	APCs	ACs	Aircraft <sup>2</sup>	HCs <sup>3</sup>
1981	33,000	285	150	200	41	37
1983	37,500	375	150	200	67	51
1985	49,500	515	255	200	141	112 (12)
1986	50,000	530	255	200	136	124 (27)
1987	53,000	540	255	200	148	127 (21)
1988	100,000	550	255	200	133	137 (21)
1989	100,000	550	255	200	179	141 (22)
1990	100,000	550	255	200	191	141 (28)

Key: APC = armored personnel carrier  
AC = armored car  
HC = helicopter

Notes: <sup>1</sup>Both heavy and light tanks included  
<sup>2</sup>Combat aircraft only  
<sup>3</sup>Numbers in brackets represent armed helicopters

### B. Soviet Arms Transfers to Angola

Year	Amount (in millions)
1980	\$536
1981	\$778
1982	\$782
1983	\$1,136
1984	\$1,500
1985	\$750
1986	\$1,130

Notes: Arms transfer values are in constant 1984 US dollars. Aggregate equipment numbers fail to give an adequate account of the nature of the Soviet-Angolan arms transfer relationship. In particular, they do not indicate qualitative improvements in Angolan forces as a result of the gradual introduction of more recent variants of weapon (e.g., the supplementing of T-34 and T-55 tanks with T-62s or the increasing numbers of Su-22 and MiG-23 ground attack aircraft in Angolan inventories).

Soviet reticence to become more deeply involved in the Angolan imbroglio was a

product of a number of factors:

1. Their deepening involvement in Afghanistan.
2. Their deepening resource constraints.<sup>39</sup>
3. The aging of the leadership and consequent *immobilisme* in policy.
4. Disaffection with the Angolan regime, stemming from five years of less than satisfactory relations.
5. The salience of issues of greater significance on the Soviet agenda than southern Africa (e.g., Poland and the dramatic deterioration in Soviet-American relations).
6. Uncertainty concerning the reaction of the new American administration to Soviet military initiatives in the Third World.
7. Increasing awareness that they had misjudged the capacity and will of South Africa to engage in significant military actions against the front line states (see chapter 1).

Whatever the reasons for it, Soviet diffidence could hardly have been reassuring to the Dos Santos leadership in Angola.

Cuban attitudes were no solace. According to some reports, Cuban policymakers were unenthusiastic about pursuing counterinsurgency operations against UNITA, claiming that they were in Angola to protect that country against South African aggression.<sup>40</sup> Their nonresponse to South African incursions in 1981 and in subsequent years suggests a lack of enthusiasm in this function as well.

The net effect was to leave the MPLA in an untenable position. Soon after Lucio Lara's return from Moscow, the Angolans implicitly indicated their willingness to accept the linkage between the presence of Cubans in Angola and the implementation of Resolution 435 in Namibia, as proposed by the Reagan administration.<sup>41</sup> In a declaration issued on February 5, 1982, the Angolans and Cubans noted that although the question of Cuban troops on Angolan soil was a purely bilateral matter, in the event of a complete South African withdrawal from Namibia, the two governments would consider resuming a gradual

withdrawal of Cubans.<sup>42</sup> This constitutes an implicit acceptance of linkage.<sup>43</sup>

The Soviet response to the Cuban-Angolan declaration of January 1982 suggests the lack of Soviet enthusiasm at this stage for any deepening of the commitment to Angola. A commentary in *Pravda*, while continuing to castigate the West for their insistence on linking the question of Namibian independence with the Cuban presence in Angola and while still insisting that the Cuban presence was a purely "bilateral matter for two sovereign states," nonetheless recognized the "important constructive element" of the declaration that stated the willingness of Cuba and Angola to begin a gradual withdrawal of Cuban forces when the external threat to Angola was removed.<sup>44</sup> Since that threat was largely the result of the South African occupation of Namibia and the supplying of UNITA from Namibian territory, this seems to be a backhanded endorsement of the concept of linkage<sup>45</sup> and suggests a willingness to consider negotiation on this basis. In other words, despite the generally expressed Soviet antipathy to Western-sponsored mediation of conflict in the region and disdain for negotiation with South Africa, they were willing (as were the Cubans) to accede to Angolan willingness to contemplate concessions in the pursuit of peace in the region. Presumably they had little else to offer. In any event, the Angolan position on the Cuban presence was insufficient to bring around the South Africans, who were now benefiting from American support on the Soviet-Cuban presence in the region and who were as yet unreconciled to the prospect of Namibian self-determination.

Soviet policy toward the end of the Brezhnev era seemed to be affected by a certain *immobilisme*. On the one hand, the USSR was unwilling to assume new burdens in Angola, either in the form of military escalation or increases in economic assistance. On the other hand, they were unwilling to accept or to actively participate in negotiations led by the United States or other Western powers that might lead toward a settlement that would reduce pressure on the Angolan regime. In these circumstances, they appeared to acquiesce in, but not to promote, policies defined principally by the Angolans themselves, which involved collaboration with the West and concessions to them (e.g., pressure on SWAPO to settle and the willingness to contemplate Cuban withdrawal), even to the point of direct negotiation with South Africa.<sup>46</sup>

Matters worsened for Angola in 1983-84. Despite higher levels of oil revenue during

this period, the Angolan economy continued its downward slide. The USSR's new leadership underlined its unwillingness to assume increasing economic burdens in its relations with friends in the Third World.<sup>47</sup> Xan Smiley graphically depicted the impact of economic decay on the quality of life in the capital in late 1982 as follows:

As the strongest base of MPLA support, Luanda is probably better off than most provincial centers ... But even so, Luanda's squalor is acute. Nearly every large building has broken windows, streets and sidewalks are pitted, rubbish is everywhere. Queues are everywhere ... The price of a cabbage or a couple of eggs sometimes exceeds the daily wage.<sup>48</sup>

In these conditions, the access of party and government workers and foreign aid personnel to special foreign currency shops not surprisingly aroused considerable discontent.

As time passed, the share of government expenditure allocated for defense grew while the price of oil faltered. The desperate and worsening condition of the economy in turn created fertile ground for further expansion of UNITA's influence in the hinterland. The capacity of UNITA to operate north of the Benguela Railroad suggested some degree of support among the MPLA's traditional base, the Kimbundu.<sup>49</sup>

In this context, the Soviets, by now under the leadership of Andropov, proved more forthcoming in military assistance (see table 3). This reflected not only the USSR's more militant line *vis-à-vis* the West under Andropov, but also presumably the increasing Angolan need for assistance in view of the fading of reasonably high hopes for a settlement in Namibia. A third factor contributing to the increasing provision of assistance to the MPLA may have been the latter's courting of China, with whom diplomatic relations were established in January of 1983.<sup>50</sup>

The Angolan establishment of relations with China, Angolan cooperation with the West in regional security initiatives, and direct Angolan-South African negotiations may have together suggested that unless the USSR increased the tangible benefits to Angola from the Soviet-Angolan relationship, they risked losing their position there. Dos Santos hinted as much in his visit to the USSR in May of 1983:

The need to strengthen our defense capability and to develop our economic and trade ties based on the excellent relations of friendship, mutual respect, and mutual benefit which have always characterized our cooperation and promoted the more effective solution of our country's most current problems -- this is

what determines our interest in the fruitfulness of this working and friendly visit to the motherland of Lenin, to the country symbolizing the unwavering defense of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.<sup>51</sup>

One can interpret this remark not only as an appeal to the ideological conscience (and image) of the Soviet leadership, but also as an indication that unless concrete objectives were met, the interest in such relations would not exist. Significant increases in economic assistance were out of the question. The only alternative was military assistance.

Increasing military assistance to the Cuban contingent in 1983, however, was not sufficient to improve the MPLA's position with respect to internal security. The Contact Group's initiatives on Namibia finally foundered in 1983 over, among other things, South African efforts to arrange an internal settlement, differences over the structure of a post-independence electoral system, and the failure of the various parties to reach agreement on the question of linkage. France withdrew from the group, citing its ineffectiveness, but also suggesting discomfort over the growing unilateralism of US policy. UNITA continued to score military successes, solidifying its position in the center of the country and in the Cazombo Salient in eastern Angola. South Africa continued its raids deep into Angola and its occupation of the area bordering Namibia.

#### B. The Lusaka Accords and Angolan Security, 1984-87

The deterioration of the internal security situation was the catalyst of the Lusaka Accords between Angola and South Africa in February of 1984. These were mediated by the United States and envisaged a withdrawal of South African forces from Angola and the cessation of assistance to UNITA in return for a curbing of SWAPO activity in southern Angola by the Angolan government. The agreement left aside the issues of Namibian independence and the Cuban presence in Angola. Its analog in southeastern Africa was the Nkomati Accord between South Africa and Mozambique, covering an end to South African assistance of RENAMO (The Mozambican National Resistance) in return for an ejection of all but a token presence of the ANC in Mozambique.

The Nkomati and Lusaka Accords ran counter to official Soviet positions on negotiation with South Africa and on the role of the United States in regional settlement.

Nonetheless, Soviet reaction was muted, the impression being left that the USSR considered such agreements an unpleasant necessity.<sup>52</sup>

Initially, the Lusaka Accords worked reasonably well. South Africa withdrew more or less completely from Angola. The two sides established workable arrangements for monitoring the disengagement zone along the frontier. Diplomacy concerning the questions of Namibian independence and the Cuban presence accelerated in the spring of 1984, but so too did UNITA activity inside Angola, the ostensible purpose of which was the crippling of the Angolan economy.<sup>53</sup>

During 1984 and 1985, Angola apparently sought to pursue a dual track in policy. On the one hand the Angolan government continued to talk to the South Africans, in Lusaka and elsewhere, about the settlement of the Namibian and Cuban issues. Indeed, in late 1984 they went considerably further than they had previously in terms of publicly linking the two issues. In November 1984, in a letter to the UN secretary general, Dos Santos proposed a four-part settlement, embracing: 1) the completion of South African withdrawal from Angola; 2) a South African pledge to honor Resolution 435 on Namibia; 3) an agreed cease-fire between SWAPO and the SADF; and 4) Angolan agreement, in conjunction with Cuba, to move forward with a Cuban withdrawal once implementation of 435 was in progress.

The proposed agreement envisaged complete withdrawal of the Cubans, contained a reasonably detailed timetable for gradual northward displacement of Cuban forces. Twenty-thousand Cubans would leave over a three year period. That the text was printed verbatim in a Soviet publication suggests Soviet acquiescence once again.<sup>54</sup>

The second track centered on UNITA. The Angolans and Cubans sought to take advantage of the South African disengagement to reduce the internal threat. Ironically perhaps, the first months of Gorbachev's tenure as leader of the CPSU were marked by a considerable increase in Soviet military assistance and Soviet-sponsored military activity in Angola. After further buildup of FAPLA with Soviet arms transfers in 1984-85, the Angolans launched a major offensive against UNITA in mid-1985, driving the insurgents out of the Cazombo Salient. The Angolan armed forces then turned southward toward Mavinga and Jamba in September.

The southward advance of Angolan forces posed a stark dilemma for South Africa.

Failure to act in defense of UNITA might have resulted in the latter's neutralization as an effective agent of South African policy in Angola. The alternative was to breach the Lusaka Accords and to intervene once again. Unwilling to go forward at this stage with Namibian independence and to accept a consolidation of the MPLA's rule in Angola (with the attendant reduction in the dependence of the South African Development Coordination Conference [SADCC] countries on South African infrastructure to get their goods to market), the South Africans used air power and ground forces to break up the Angolan offensive in September.<sup>55</sup> This had the effect of narrowing considerably the potential for any regional settlement at this stage.

The diplomatic option weakened also as a result of the decision of the US Congress in July 1985 to rescind the Clark Amendment prohibiting US involvement in the Angolan conflict. In the Soviet and Angolan view, this discredited the U.S. effort to mediate the conflicts involving Angola, Cuba, and South Africa.<sup>56</sup> The American decision, coupled with recurring South African pressure, resulted in a weakening of those in Angola favorable to negotiation and a lengthy suspension of Angolan cooperation in Assistant Secretary of State Crocker's efforts to mediate the Angolan and Namibian disputes.

Soviet policymakers also drew from these developments the conclusion that the situation demanded further strengthening of the military capability of FAPLA.<sup>57</sup> The critical issue from an operational standpoint was the question of air superiority. The major component of Soviet assistance in 1985-86 was sophisticated air defense radar and increased numbers of fighter-interceptors.<sup>58</sup> The radar net was concentrated in southern Angola along an east-west axis from Mocamedes to Menongue, with a planned extension to Mavinga in the event of a FAPLA capture of that town. The Soviet and Angolan calculus was that, in part as a result of the arms embargo and consequent difficulties in replacing lost aircraft, South Africa would be unwilling to risk significant use of air power over Angola. In these circumstances, the use of ground forces in support of UNITA would be a dangerous proposition.

On the basis of this logic, the Soviets counseled a renewal of the offensive during the 1986 dry season (mid-year). UNITA meanwhile sought to forestall the offensive with diversionary guerrilla attacks in northern and central Angola, operations in the north being

facilitated by the opening of a new supply line for American materiel from Zaire. UNITA actions in these areas occasioned the repositioning of FAPLA units from south to north to protect key economic assets.<sup>59</sup> As a result, the planned offensive never really materialized.

American assistance included Stinger missiles, presumably to counter the Angolan government's growing advantage in the air. The renewal of American assistance to UNITA constrained Soviet flexibility in pursuing diplomatic options in southern Africa. At a time when the USSR was disparaging the utility of force and espousing efforts to resolve Third World disputes by political means, including disputes in southern Africa,<sup>60</sup> the Soviets were consequently engaged in a massive resupply of FAPLA in preparation for an attempt to resolve by military strength the conflict with UNITA and South Africa. This suggests that although the leadership was by this time in the midst of a reconsideration of the benefits and costs of inherited Third World alliances, in practice they were unwilling at this stage to abandon their friends or to force them to negotiate from a position of weakness.<sup>61</sup> Reports from the region suggested that the Soviets were more sanguine about prospects for offensive action in 1986-87 than were their Angolan and Cuban confreres.<sup>62</sup>

The Angolans, by contrast, had by late 1986 thought better of their decision to cease cooperation with the United States in southern Africa. Significant change in the Angolan leadership at the Second MPLA Congress in December 1985 probably facilitated this shift. At this time, more moderate elements of the MPLA reasserted themselves at the expense of what had traditionally been conceived of as an ideologically dogmatic "Marxist" faction, whose members shared strong pro-Soviet leanings (e.g., Lucio Lara).<sup>63</sup>

Some have interpreted these leadership changes as evidence of and cause for greater conflict between the USSR and Angola. This seems improbable. The "ideologues," such as Lucio Lara, who were displaced had close contacts with similar personalities (e.g., Boris Ponomarev and Rostislav Ul'ianovskii of the CPSU's International Department) whose days in the Soviet leadership were numbered. The more "pragmatic" winners in the shuffle, such as Pedro de Castro Van Dunem promoted in this instance to Minister of Production,<sup>64</sup> resembled the emerging CPSU leadership in many respects. Of particular significance was the willingness of this more moderate leadership to contemplate significant compromise on issues of regional security.



### C. Change in Soviet Policy toward Angola, 1987-88

The consolidation of more pragmatic and technocratic elements in Angola coincided with a similar consolidation in the foreign policy apparatus in the USSR, with Boris Ponomarev being replaced initially by Anatolii Dobrynin in the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee. Eduard Shevardnadze replaced Andrei Gromyko in the foreign ministry. In subsequent years there was a rather thorough reshuffling at the deputy minister level. This tended to favor diplomats with significant experience in Europe and the United States.

These changes in personnel corresponded to a focus, driven largely by the domestic imperatives of perestroika, on the improvement of the relationship with the West, presumably in order to ensure a more tranquil environment in which to pursue internal reform, to reduce the level of defense competition with the United States in order to free up resources for internal economic regeneration, and to secure freer access to Western technology and managerial expertise in the drive for efficiency. Third World issues receded into the background. Soviet diplomatic attention in the Third World shifted toward larger and more economically important actors and away from the socialist-oriented states.<sup>65</sup>

As has been noted elsewhere in this volume, the more critical and pessimistic appraisals of socialist-oriented states and of the correlation of forces in the Third World, which were characteristic of the academic literature in the mid-1980s, came increasingly to approximate official thinking during the Gorbachev era. The Soviet leadership was particularly interested in reducing the impact of Third World issues on the development of the East-West relationship. They recognized in particular that, although the conflicts in which they had become competitively involved might not be products of rivalry between the superpowers, they impeded progress on central issues such as trade and arms control.<sup>66</sup> Hence, for example, Eduard Shevardnadze called for a deideologization of international relations through a reduction in the focus on class struggle as a component of Soviet foreign policy.<sup>67</sup> This occasioned a shift in attitudes toward Western-mediated efforts at conflict resolution in areas such as southern Africa. Where previously, Soviet statements tended to dismiss such efforts as malevolent and misguided attempts by "imperialism" to sustain neocolonial domination of the Third World, and in practice the USSR at best grudgingly

acquiesced in the exploration of initiatives of this type by their Third World clients, they now embraced a collaborative diplomacy of conflict resolution as part of their conception of "universal security."<sup>68</sup> In the southern African context, prospects for such collaboration were deemed to be particularly promising, given the mutual interest of the USSR and the US in the avoidance of confrontation and escalation in the region, as well as their mutual concern with reforming the apartheid system.

A strong manifestation of the reduced emphasis on class struggle as it pertained to the Third World lay in changing Soviet perspectives on internal conflict. Some scholars noted the near irrelevance of concepts of class and class struggle to Third World societies and the clear salience of issues such as ethnicity and other communal identities in the politics of these states.<sup>69</sup> In these circumstances, the advocacy of national reconciliation, and of the consequent broadening of politics beyond the vanguard party, replaced the prior emphasis on class struggle and resistance to imperialist intervention.

Although these shifts in Soviet perspective were the result in part of factors pertinent to the domestic political situation in the USSR, they responded also to the experience of learning in the region. The practical experience of socialist orientation in Angola, for example, had been nothing short of disastrous. It was only the activities of Western multinationals which saved the country from collapse. Owing to the economic crisis, Angola could not service its debts to the USSR. The decline in the price of oil and the increase in arms transfers at the same time greatly increased the debt load. The Soviets, as a result of the worsening economic conditions at home, were having increasing problems in carrying nonperforming debt.<sup>70</sup>

The vanguard party and its approach to governance were also hardly inspiring. The MPLA had manifestly failed to obtain any support among the largest ethnic group in the country, the Ovimbundu, and received only diffident and sporadic support from its own historical base, the Kimbundu. South Africa's activities from 1981 to 1988 betrayed the vacuity of Soviet claims about the regional correlation of forces shifting inexorably in favor of the forces of liberation and progress.

This combination of internal and external factors created a no-win situation in the views of both the Soviet Union and the MPLA. This suggested efforts at internal and

regional settlement. The fact that the USSR had no significant status as a diplomatic actor in the region, and in particular no relationship with South Africa or UNITA, in turn indicated that cooperation in American-led initiatives should be explored. The fact that, whatever the Soviet theoretical perspective on linkage, the USSR's and Cuba's behavior in southern Africa and particularly in Angola had damaged the superpower relationship reinforced this shift in perspective.

Increasing Soviet willingness to endorse and support a political settlement of regional issues, coupled with the advocacy of significant political and economic change inside Angola along lines not dissimilar to those contemplated by the Soviet leadership in its own domestic reform,<sup>71</sup> did not translate into willingness to forsake its Angolan ally or to push it into negotiation from a position of weakness. Indeed, to the extent that the Soviets held the view that an improvement in the military situation was a necessary precondition for meaningful negotiation with South Africa, their interest in a political settlement may have encouraged a more assertive Angolan military posture.

The Soviets financed, equipped, and assisted in the planning of a further offensive against UNITA's bases in the southeast in the middle of 1987. Given the gradually shifting balance of air power in southern Angola, their assumption was that South Africa would not respond as it had previously. The Cubans dissented, skeptical of the prospects for the success of large scale conventional operations against UNITA, and perhaps nervous about the potential South African military response.<sup>72</sup>

As it turned out, the Cubans were right. When FAPLA advanced on Mavinga in September, South African aircraft attacked and bloodied them severely. The South Africans also used the new mobile long range artillery (the G2), developed to compensate for deteriorating air superiority, to considerable effect. South African ground forces assisted UNITA in repelling a second FAPLA advance on Mavinga in October, and FAPLA retreated to Cuito Cuanavale. Once again, the Angolans and the Soviets had fundamentally misjudged South African capacities and their resolve to sustain UNITA as an effective instrument within Angola.

Angola, presumably in consultation with the USSR, meanwhile resumed negotiations with the United States over the regional conflict in April 1987. The virulently anti-American

rhetoric of the past year was abandoned,<sup>73</sup> as were more extreme Angolan demands related to the question of regional settlement. The Angolans, for example, dropped their demand of the previous two years for the abolition of the apartheid system as a precondition for a political settlement.<sup>74</sup> When Assistant Secretary Crocker termed the July 1987 Angolan-American talks a waste of time, the Angolans were quick to contest this assessment. They suggested instead that the United States was abandoning its previous inflexibility and was airing new ideas. There was, consequently, room for optimism in the search for a political settlement.<sup>75</sup> They also clearly rejected force alone as a means of settling the problems of southern Africa.<sup>76</sup> There were more concrete aspects to Angolan diplomacy as well. In August, the Angolans shortened the proposed timetable for withdrawal of Cubans from three years, as envisaged in their 1984 platform to two. Cuban withdrawal was, however, linked to a cessation in American assistance to UNITA and to the inclusion of Cuba as an official participant in talks.<sup>77</sup>

Growing Angolan flexibility on linkage may have resulted in part from operational confidence prior to the battle for Mavinga. It was presumably linked also to further shifts in Angolan economic policy. Matters had again worsened for Angola in the preceding year, largely due to further decreases in the price of oil. In announcing a substantial new reform package, Dos Santos noted that the external debt had grown to \$4 billion by the end of 1986. The success of the reform was predicated to a considerable extent on the termination of, or at least a significant reduction in, hostilities.<sup>78</sup> It also required substantial Western participation in the financing of reconstruction and development.<sup>79</sup> Greater flexibility on political issues might facilitate access to necessary economic assistance. There is no evidence of any Soviet dissent from the pursuit of negotiations by the Angolans or unhappiness with the limited concessions made prior to Angola's military setback in October. The Cubans, mollified perhaps by the demand for their participation in the talks, were not posing significant obstacles to negotiation either, despite earlier differences on the duration of the Cuban presence. Most close observers of this process<sup>80</sup> felt that fairly steady progress was being made by the end of September 1987.

The defeat of the Angolans before Mavinga in October caused the negotiations to stall. Where confidence of a significant internal victory had spurred the Angolan embrace of

negotiation, defeat had the opposite effect. It caused many to doubt the wisdom of negotiation from obvious weakness, particularly in regard to concessions on the duration of the Cuban presence.

The Soviets responded to the defeat with a further massive resupply of FAPLA. But perhaps the more important role was Cuba's. UNITA and the SADF sought to capitalize on their victory by seizing the MPLA forward base at Cuito Cuanavale. This would have complicated greatly the logistics of FAPLA's efforts to renew offensive operations in the southeast while setting back the Angolan attempt to extend air cover into the border area along the Caprivi Strip.

In these circumstances, the Angolans chose to escalate. Dos Santos visited Castro in November of 1987 to request an augmentation of the Cuban contingent. The Cubans agreed. By the end of the year the Cuban force in Angola numbered some 40,000 and was heading for 50,000. With these new heavily armed forces in place, the Cubans moved contingents southeast to relieve Cuito Cuanavale and directly south toward concentrations of South African forces in Cunene Province. The South African threat to Cuito Cuanavale was contained by January of 1988. Once in the South, the Cubans and Angolans rapidly upgraded the infrastructure to support air power and commenced far more assertive patrolling in the border area. Cuban forces engaged the South Africans in proximity to the Namibian frontier on a number of occasions from March through the summer of 1988. Perhaps the most notable skirmish was that in June near the Calueque Dam where the South Africans reported some 300 Cuban and Angolan casualties and also the loss of 12 white soldiers in the SADF.<sup>81</sup> The bulk of South African casualties occurred during an air strike. This suggests change in the balance of air power along the Namibian frontier.<sup>82</sup>

Although there was some speculation at the time that the Angolans and Cubans had decided to seek a military solution to Angola's civil war, and then possibly to extend the war into Namibia, it appears retrospectively that this was not the case. Instead, the intent was to improve Angola's (by this time joined by Cuba as a full participant in talks with South Africa under American mediation) negotiating position by reversing previous defeats and, more to the point, by raising the military costs for South Africa in sustaining its intervention inside Angola. Angola and Cuba continued to negotiate despite their military success. Moreover,

they made important concessions during this period. For the first time, Angola and Cuba stated that they were willing to contemplate complete Cuban withdrawal from Angola in return for South African departure from Angola, the cessation of South African support for UNITA, and the implementation of Resolution 435 in Namibia.<sup>83</sup>

Although Cuba had recently expressed far more militant views on the question of its presence than the Angolans were comfortable with,<sup>84</sup> Cuba itself was developing an interest in peace. Cuba was already having trouble in its economic relationship with the USSR, which was growing restive over the permanent drain on its scarce resources emanating from its relations with Cuba.<sup>85</sup> In these conditions, Cuba found it necessary in the first place to move toward a reduction in its offshore commitments. The increasing Angolan incapacity to contribute to the costs of the Cuban deployment also favored movement in this direction.

Second, much of the drain on Cuba's resources from defense spending was related to its relationship with the United States. Moreover, Cuba's economic difficulties resulted at least in part from denial of access to US markets. In these conditions, and with Soviet support growing questionable, it made sense to remove obvious obstacles to the improvement of relations with the United States, such as the Cuban troop presence in Angola.<sup>86</sup> Achieving a removal of South African troops from Angola, and establishing the conditions for an accession to power by SWAPO following the implementation of Resolution 435 would allow Castro to retain, or even enhance, his prestige in Africa while addressing these pressing concerns through a withdrawal.

There is some ambiguity about whether the USSR supported the dramatic escalation of Cuban military activity in southern Angola in 1988. Cuban sources report that just as the Cubans had opposed the Soviet-backed FAPLA offensive of August-October 1987, the Soviets opposed subsequent forward deployment of Cuban forces.<sup>87</sup> At one level, this would be logical. An escalation of external (and particularly Cuban) involvement in the Angolan conflict might have complicated the Soviet-American relationship at a time when significant progress (e.g., the December 1987 INF Treaty) was being made.

On the other hand, the Cubans have often sought to underline their independence from the USSR, and to contrast in a manner unflattering to the latter the levels of commitment of the two powers to revolutionary progress in the Third World. There is little

evidence from the published record to indicate Soviet dissent from the operation. If anything, the military developments of late 1987 stimulated greater public Soviet militancy on the issue of conflict resolution.<sup>88</sup> Finally, the USSR had the means (logistical and financial) to prevent the implementation of the Cuban-Angolan decision to escalate, and did not use them. If the Soviets did resist, they did not resist very hard or very long.

Indeed, the Cuban operation was consistent with the basic logic of Soviet diplomacy with respect to Angola. If the major problem in promoting a political settlement was the weakness of the Angolan negotiating position and, conversely, a continuing South African belief that they could attain their objectives unilaterally and by force, the Cuban deployment may have been judged to be a necessary component of a strategy of political settlement. It increased the material and human costs to South Africa. To the extent that Cuban operations resulted in Cuban-Angolan air superiority in southern Angola, it rendered the South African ground forces' position inside Angola untenable. This appears to be exactly what happened.<sup>89</sup>

In the meantime, Soviet pressure on their allies to continue the quest for a political settlement grew through 1988. As noted earlier, Cuba and Angola were both interested in settlement for reasons of their own. But the Angolans were particularly sensitive on the question of the timetable for Cuban withdrawal, as a Cuban departure while UNITA remained militarily viable would pose an unacceptable threat to the survival of the MPLA. The Cubans were unwilling to abandon them to such a fate. The South Africans, by contrast, were pressing for early and rapid withdrawal. By most accounts, in addition to striving to keep Cuba and Angola at the table during the summer of 1988 (e.g., at the Cairo meetings of the talks in June, when the South African demand for a seven-month Cuban withdrawal period came close to provoking a walkout by Angola and Cuba), the Soviets pressed their two allies to narrow the gap on the Cuban withdrawal issue. Ultimately, the Angolans moved from their official position at the outset of talks (four-year withdrawal) to the twenty-seven-month period established in the final accord. According to some reports, the Soviet side also encouraged the Angolans to address the UNITA problem via negotiations, including talks with Savimbi himself.<sup>90</sup>

Counsels of moderation to the Cubans and Angolans were complemented by a

deepening of direct Soviet contacts with the United States on the Angola-Namibia question. These had begun in 1984-85. Meetings between Adamishin and Crocker in Lisbon in May of 1988 were assessed very positively by both sides. Their efforts to prevent a breaking up of the talks in Cairo suggest a degree of coordination in their activity. Soviet suggestions to the MPLA to negotiate with UNITA to some degree may have been a response to an American request, though such action also followed the general Soviet emphasis at this time on national reconciliation in civil conflicts involving their friends.

The change in the military balance in southern Angola and the deepening interest of all parties to the conflict in a political settlement of Angola's civil war produced a US-mediated accord in December 1988. It had the following features:

1. South African nonintervention within Angola.
2. The cessation of South African assistance to UNITA.
3. The implementation of Resolution 435 in Namibia by a multinational UN force.
4. The withdrawal over a period of twenty-seven months of the Cuban contingent in Angola.
5. A reduction in the ANC presence in Angola.
6. The acceptance by the two superpowers of a role as guarantors of the regional settlement.

As noted earlier, the final accord involved a number of concessions on the Soviet-Cuban-Angolan side, among them the abandonment of any conditions pertaining to apartheid in South Africa, acceptance of total Cuban withdrawal from Angola, significant shortening of the timetable for such withdrawal, and the absence of any provision for cessation of US assistance to UNITA.<sup>91</sup>

#### D. The Aftermath of the Tripartite Accord

The implementation of the accords went reasonably smoothly. South African forces left Angola on time. The Cuban withdrawal was proceeding on schedule, if not ahead of it. The ANC military presence in Angola was curbed, and the South Africans began an orderly



transfer of power to the United Nations in Namibia.

This was interrupted by a series of incidents in northern Namibia in April 1989, in which SADF and SWATF forces intercepted SWAPO military units crossing into Namibia from camps in southern Angola. The origins of this event are unclear, though it does seem to have been a decision made by SWAPO without consulting the Angolans or Soviets. It may have been the result of the accord's ambiguity on the conditions pertaining to SWAPO military troops, a misinterpretation of the conditions of the agreement by SWAPO, or a deliberate violation in the hope of strengthening SWAPO's in-country presence in the period leading up to elections. In any case, it was quickly handled by a massive and brutal application of force by the South Africans.

The SWAPO incursion was the subject of the first meeting of the guarantors and parties to the tripartite accords at Mt. Etjo in Namibia in the second week of April 1989. An accord was quickly reached to return SWAPO survivors to camps in southern Angola. From our perspective, what was significant was the equanimity and constructive approach of the Soviets in dealing with what could have been an explosive incident jeopardizing the peace process itself. Soviet commentary seemed to apportion blame fairly, reaffirming support for the Tripartite Accord and for the peace process in Namibia, and criticizing SWAPO for the error of sending the guerrillas home.<sup>92</sup> Soviet diplomacy displayed a desire to get beyond the incident as quickly as possible, with a view to the continuation of Cuban withdrawal from Angola and of the Resolution 435 process in Namibia.

The major remaining obstacle to normalization in the region was the continuation of the internal war between the MPLA and UNITA in Angola. It appears that South African support of UNITA, while slow to disappear entirely, has diminished significantly. The Cubans have continued their withdrawal despite the war. The Soviets have clearly sought to achieve a reconciliation of the two parties through a political settlement, but have been reluctant to apply significant pressure in this direction while fighting continues and while the United States continues to arm UNITA via bases in Zaire. Once again, in other words, the USSR finds itself in some respects the prisoner of Angolan policy. The settlement of the internal war depends primarily on the willingness of the internal parties to settle.

A joint Soviet-American decision to cease arms transfers to the MPLA and UNITA

might have a significant effect on their choice of war or negotiation and compromise. But the Angolan government as yet lacks the sense of security necessary for it to accept such an agreement. The Soviet Union, in turn, is reluctant to force one upon them, as this could appear to be a surrender of the interests of a longtime friend to the quest for a more stable and amicable superpower relationship. Moreover, Soviet policymakers responsible for the relationship with Angola may hold the view that, if confidence is necessary for good faith negotiation, then a cessation of arms transfers would reduce chances for successful mediation.

In any event the USSR continued a high level of arms transfers after the conclusion of the Tripartite Accord (see table 3). This involved making good the losses of 1987-88 and sustaining Angolan capability to wage war on UNITA. By the time of writing, however, there was some indication that flows were slowing down.<sup>93</sup> There was also clear indication that the numbers of Soviet advisers in Angola were falling. This suggests a Soviet decision to build up the MPLA to the point where it stood a chance of making it on its own, but not to sustain the level of assistance indefinitely. Soviet skepticism about the wisdom of blank checks for arms transfers was clear in the Janelis' June 1990 analysis of the state of the Angolan military, where the author noted that much of the equipment shipped by the USSR was poorly maintained and that, consequently, it rapidly became useless.<sup>94</sup>

The two superpowers clearly sought an end to the civil war in Angola. For reasons noted above, however, they were unable to agree on the terms for a cessation of hostilities. This left space for other parties to mediate the dispute. The first major attempt was that of Mobutu Sese Seko at Gbadolite in June of 1989. After engineering a face-to-face meeting between Eduardo Dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, Mobutu announced an agreement. This rapidly fell apart amidst considerable recrimination, in particular over the role of Savimbi in a post-settlement Angola. The reasons for the misunderstanding remain unclear.<sup>95</sup>

But the meeting and its denouement did indicate the basic parameters of disagreement between the two parties. Most notably, the Angolan government was as yet unwilling to grant UNITA a place in Angolan politics as an autonomous organization, instead preferring that the movement be folded into the MPLA, and insisting on Savimbi's removal for a time from the Angolan scene.<sup>96</sup> UNITA, by contrast, sought the dismantlement of the one-party

system and inclusion as a full partner in a transitional government during the lead up to elections. In short, neither party was ready to settle.

In particular, the MPLA was as yet unconvinced of the improbability of victory on the battlefield, or more modestly, of the unlikelihood of the proposition that further effort on the battlefield might produce a more advantageous negotiating position, from which they could achieve a settlement obviating any necessity to deal with UNITA as an equal. As a result, the MPLA took the offensive again in early 1990, and this time succeeded in taking Mavinga. Subsequent events displayed the continuing weakness of its military posture. FAPLA forces in the south suffered from poor logistical support and went hungry, while UNITA successfully mounted very damaging sabotage attacks against infrastructural targets in the north (e.g., the interruption of Luanda's water supply). FAPLA's effort in the south was also hampered by the refusal of Namibia to allow it to use the Caprivi Strip for operations against Jamba.

There is not much hard evidence concerning the Soviet attitude toward this final MPLA effort to extinguish UNITA by force. On the one hand, it is widely reported that Soviet advisers assisted in the planning of the operation. On the other hand, the insistence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that force was not the way out and that a negotiated settlement was a necessity continued unabated. This was a major theme of Shevardnadze's visit to Luanda just prior to his attending Namibian independence celebrations. In meetings with the Angolan President and Foreign Minister, he repeatedly stressed that "there can only be a political solution: obviously there cannot be a military solution."<sup>97</sup> He made no mention of the then current FAPLA military operations in the south. That he was so adamant on the question of political settlement at the very moment when Angola was attempting a military solution suggests a significant disparity in their positions.

The failure of the Mavinga offensive early in 1990 and the renewed evidence of the MPLA's vulnerability to crippling attacks in proximity to Luanda seem to have altered the MPLA's calculus of cost and benefit in negotiation once again. Talks under Portuguese mediation began in April of 1990, and seem to be going well. In particular, the MPLA recently agreed to the dissolution of the single vanguard-party system and its replacement with a multiparty democracy. This appears to leave the way open for legitimate UNITA

participation in Angolan politics, particularly since UNITA has now recognized the legitimacy of the Angolan state. This, however, does not solve the problem of what to do with UNITA military forces during the period of transition. Nor is there any final settlement of the question of Savimbi himself. Nor finally, is there any meeting of the minds on the length of the transitional period prior to elections, with the MPLA insisting on a three-year hiatus, and UNITA seeking a hiatus of no more than a year.

The Portuguese-mediated negotiations through the spring and summer of 1990 were accompanied by efforts on the part of the superpowers to encourage conciliatory positions on the part of their friends. Secretary of State Baker has discouraged UNITA from seeking a military solution, while, as noted above, the Soviets have done similarly with the MPLA. By September, the USSR and the United States had joined the talks as observers. Subsequently, the two agreed to assist in the policing of a cease-fire. The evolution of both the Soviet and American roles in the latter part of 1990 suggested very close coordination of their positions, in an apparent effort to remove the Angolan conflict from their own agendas as quickly as possible.

The combination of face-to-face talks, behind the scenes pressure, and renewed military stalemate produced a situation at the end of 1990 in which a settlement appeared imminent, and the superpowers resumed a coordinated private and public diplomacy of conflict resolution. In December, the Soviets for the first time effectively recognized Savimbi as a legitimate participant in Angolan politics when Foreign Minister Shevardnadze met him in Washington after consultations on the Angolan issue with Secretary of State Baker.<sup>98</sup> This act suggested that the Soviets were now willing to present the MPLA with public evidence of their desire for a compromise with Savimbi. The *quid pro quo* was a meeting between Baker and Pedro de Castro Van Dunem, presumably intended to convey a similar message to Savimbi to the effect that the United States viewed compromise with the MPLA rather than continuation of the war to victory as a desirable course for UNITA to take.

The talks are to enter a sixth round in January of 1991. Both the United States and the USSR have expressed optimism that an agreement on cease-fire and transition will be reached at that time. The end to this chapter, may, in other words, be imminent. The

marginal role that the USSR plays in the process of settlement of the internal conflicts is symptomatic of its increasing irrelevance to Angola's domestic politics and foreign policy. Military assistance, which was the heart of the Soviet-Angolan relationship, is winding down. The Soviet Union has always been a marginal player in the Angolan economy, particularly in contrast to American multinationals. The reduction in size of the state sector and greater openness to the foreign private sector envisaged in the Angolan reform will diminish the Soviet economic role, as will the increasing domestic political pressure on the Soviet official assistance budget.<sup>99</sup> The abandonment of the vanguard-party model stands to reduce whatever ideological influence the USSR once possessed. One must conclude that the relationship opened by the victory of the MPLA in the second war of liberation has drawn to an end. Quite what will replace it is unclear, but we may be assured that whatever relationship takes its place will be far looser and less substantial. There seems little material or subjective basis for a continuation of the Soviet-Angolan special relationship.

## V. Conclusion

The years of our rivalry in Angola resulted in no substantial gains to any of the parties involved. This is especially true of the Angolans themselves, who have gained only sorrow and deprivation from the long conflict.<sup>100</sup> The outcome to the 1988 process of negotiation, and subsequent Soviet policy suggest clearly that Soviet advocacy of conflict resolution in Angola was not a rhetorical veneer designed to mask a continued and expanded diplomacy of force in southern Africa. Instead, it suggests a fundamental reappraisal of the likely benefits and costs associated with involvement in an interminable conflict in an economically shattered and politically weak allied state.

This reappraisal began in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the face of growing evidence of weakness of Soviet influence in Angola, of the weakness and decline of the country's socialist-oriented economy, and of the factionalism and ineffectiveness of the local leadership. It grew stronger in the early 1980s in view of deepening South African involvement in Angola's affairs, the spread of the UNITA insurgency, and the growing independence of Angolan efforts to negotiate a way out of its internal security crisis.

Soviet initiative at this stage was hampered by the weakness and *immobilisme* of the

transitional leadership, by continuing internal resistance to the abandonment of ideological orthodoxy in the Third World,<sup>101</sup> and by the bitterness of the Soviet leadership toward US policies. These policies included the abandonment of detente, the initiation of a major military buildup, and the support of anti-Marxist insurgencies in an effort to take advantage of Soviet vulnerabilities in the Third World. The leadership was probably aware by this time that the investments of the 1970s in positions such as that in Angola were not turning out as anticipated or desired. But they did not seem to know what to do about it.

They did know, however, what they were unwilling to do: They would not cut their losses at this stage and pull out, presumably as much for reasons of prestige as anything else. Indeed, Soviet behavior in 1983-85 shows a willingness to do what was necessary to preserve their relationship with Angola. However, devoid of constructive ideas on how to reduce the crisis facing Angola, they were content to let the Angolans call the tune in the quest for settlement.

Things changed under Gorbachev. The evolving pattern of Soviet policy toward Angola since early 1985 suggests a recognition on the part of policymakers that:

1. The costs of their involvement in Angola exceeded the benefits.
2. Competition in southern Africa needlessly complicated the relationship with the United States at a time when the Soviets were strongly desirous of improvement in that relationship.
3. A focus in Soviet policy on military means was unlikely to bring a resolution of the civil conflict in Angola.
4. The USSR by itself lacked the diplomatic means to secure a regional settlement.

In line with these conclusions, Soviet policy displayed significant evolution in both the diplomatic and military arenas. On the one hand, the USSR abandoned its previous disdain for US mediation of the Namibian and Angolan issues, accepted the US lead, and moved to a posture of active cooperation with the United States on the diplomatic front. It also abandoned the more extreme of its previously stated conditions for settlement, and apparently did what it could to nudge the Angolans and Cubans into concessions on sticking points such as the extent and timetable of Cuban withdrawal.

Ironically, however, the seriousness of the Soviet commitment to a settlement allowing them to disengage led them to increase military assistance to Angola and to acquiesce in, if not to support actively, a major escalation in Cuban involvement. Far from being contradictory, controlled escalation and a diplomacy of conflict resolution were complementary facets of Soviet strategy toward Angola.

Soviet cooperation in the effort to resolve the regional conflict surrounding Angola suggests a significant alteration in the USSR's order of priorities in regional policy. The mid- and late 1970s were characterized by an effort to secure durable influence in the region through assisting in the implantation of regimes ostensibly committed to a thorough restructuring of politics, economics, and society along Leninist lines and tied to the USSR through an "international socialist division of labor." Recognition of the inability of the USSR and the socialist community to fuel the economic development of Angola brought acquiescence and later advocacy of continuing Angolan reliance on trading ties with the capitalist states and investment by multinational firms in the Angolan economy. As the limits on Soviet economic capacity became clearer, and as Angola's internal security deteriorated in the early 1980s, the USSR relied more exclusively on the military instrument in its efforts to preserve the "positions of socialism" and the influence of the USSR. As long as Angola was threatened by internal unrest and intervention from South Africa, she remained strongly dependent on Cuba and the USSR for military aid. Even this, however, did not bring Angolan reliability on issues in which the perceived interests of the two states diverged.

Soviet support for a settlement of the Angola-Namibia questions involved the risk of surrendering the principal Soviet leverage over the MPLA and SWAPO. To the extent that Namibian independence and the cessation of South African interference in Angola's internal affairs enhanced Angolan security, Angolan dependence on Soviet military assistance diminished, as did what hold the USSR had on Angola. To some extent, the continuing problem of UNITA insurgency sustained the material basis of Soviet influence subsequent to the December 1988 accord. But Soviet advocacy of national reconciliation with UNITA and Soviet facilitation of talks aimed at this end suggest that the Soviets want this conflict ended as well.

Soviet willingness to accept such risks, along with Soviet approval of Angolan

internal reform, which in some respects appears to involve a retreat from the "noncapitalist path of development," suggests that the preservation of influence is no longer a key priority in Soviet policy toward Angola. On the other hand, Soviet behavior in the period leading up to and subsequent to the December 1988 accords suggests that the USSR remains sensitive to issues of prestige in this region, and in particular to the costs from simply abandoning the MPLA to its own devices in the face of a formidable combination of internal and external adversaries. The activity of the USSR on the diplomatic front, as a guarantor of the 1988 accords and as an active participant in the mediation of the dispute between UNITA and the MPLA suggest also a Soviet desire to retain some role in this region. In this sense, although the Soviet capacity and willingness to bear the burdens of its traditional policy in the region have declined dramatically, this does not constitute an abdication of role. What has changed are the parameters of that role and the objectives it is designed to attain.

This evolution resulted not merely from the evolution of domestic politics and priorities inside the USSR, although these clearly had great significance in determining its direction. Nor was it explicable solely in terms of a Soviet desire for an improvement in relations with the United States, though this too was of considerable importance. The close relationship between accumulated experience in the region and the adjustment of policy suggests that the experience of relations with a state and a region the politics of which are not easily susceptible to external manipulation and control also had a major role in defining the parameters of change in Soviet policy in the region.



## NOTES

1. Research for this paper was conducted with support from the Berkeley-Stanford Program for Soviet Studies, The University of Virginia, and the National Council for Soviet and East European Research. The author's understanding of issues relating to Soviet-Angolan relations has been considerably enhanced by the opportunity to participate in the ACLS/ANSSSR exchange of younger scholars in international relations and security, sponsored by IREX.
2. This is not to say that this approach was purely instrumental and power-political. The embrace of the vanguard-party model was consistent with and may have derived to some extent from the residual millenarianism of elements of the CPSU hierarchy.
3. There was more than occasional friction between the CPSU and the MPLA leadership. See John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution* vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), *passim*.
4. There are, of course, two sides to this relationship and the Angolan one is at least as rich, varied, and in some contexts significant as the Soviet one. This analysis covers the Soviet side much more heavily than the Angolan one. This is not meant as a depreciation of the latter. It merely conforms to the purposes of this volume.
5. I realize that such a conception of learning risks criticism from those who might argue that what I am really saying is that learning means the Soviets becoming more like us. However, I do not consider conventional American assumptions about Third World politics necessarily to be any less ideological than conventional Soviet ones. See my *Superpower Rivalry and Third World Radicalism: The Idea of National Liberation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), chapter 6. Moreover, although I am sensitive to the problems of projecting my own values into what is supposed to be a value-neutral analysis, it seems to me that in many cases, when faced with competing generalizations about social and political life, it is not difficult to ascertain which more closely reflect empirical reality. If, on the basis of experience, a community moves from general acceptance of -- and action upon -- the less accurate generalization to the more accurate, this strikes me as good *prima facie* evidence of learning.
6. See Edward Gonzales, "The Operational Goals of Cuban Policy in Africa," in Carmen Mesa-Lago and June Belkin, eds., *Cuba in Africa* (Pittsburgh, PA: Center of Latin American Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 1982).
7. "Joint Communiqué," Moscow Radio in Portuguese in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service -- Soviet Union* (hereafter *FBIS -- Soviet Union*) (2 June 1976): H/1-2.

8. *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (2 June 1976): H/1-2.
9. Seth Singleton, "From Intervention to Consolidation: The Soviet Union and South Africa," in Mark Kauppi and R. Craig Nation, eds., *The Soviet Impact on Africa* (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1984), 106, 108.
10. Text in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (12 October 1976): H/1-4.
11. E. Tarabrin, in *Sovetskaya Rossia*, 18 March 1977.
12. See Yusuf Dadu, "Interview," *Kommunist*, as cited by Moscow TASS in English (1 June 1976) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (3 June 1976): H/8.
13. "Soviet-Angolan Statement," *Pravda*, 14 October 1976, 1-2.
14. John Marcum has noted that the Angolan government resisted Soviet requests for military facilities in the late 1970s. See John Marcum, "Angola," in Gwendolen Carter and Patrick O'Meara, eds., *Southern Africa: The Continuing Crisis* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 190-4.
15. See *Africa Contemporary Record* 10 (1977-78): B/511-12.
16. William Leogrande, "Cuban Policy in Africa," in Mesa-Lago and Belkin, eds., *Cubans in Africa*, 30.
17. See Gerald Bender, "The Eagle and the Bear in Angola," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, no. 489 (January 1987): 130. One measure of tension in the relationship was the ejection of the Soviet ambassador from Angola after the coup.
18. See Neto's almost Shakespearean protestation that "everything goes well" in the relationship between the two countries at a luncheon speech during his September 1977 visit to the USSR. Moscow TASS in English, (29 September 1977) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (29 September 1977): H/4. Although I am not prone to textual exegesis, it is interesting to note the difference between the Soviet-Angolan statement of 14 October 1976, on the occasion of Neto's first post-independence visit to the Soviet Union and that at the end of his second visit in September 1977. The first noted that talks occurred in an atmosphere of "friendship and international solidarity." Moscow TASS in English (14 October 1976) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (16 October 1976): H/1. The second noted the "fruitful and constructive" nature of the talks. This seems somewhat less expansive. Moscow Radio in Portuguese to Angola (1 October 1977) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (3 October 1977): H/3.
19. Moscow TASS in English (7 December 1977) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (8 December

- 1977): H/5.
20. *Africa Contemporary Record* 10 (1977-78): B/503.
  21. Cuban forces began to withdraw in April 1976 only to reverse the decision in 1977 after the coup and in the context of growing tension over Shaba and limited intrusions of South African forces into southern Angola in 1978. Angola and Cuba agreed to resume the withdrawal in mid-1979, but suspended it later in the year. This sequence was outlined in the joint Cuban-Angolan statement of February 5 1982. See Moscow TASS in English (5 February 1982) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (8 February 1982): J/1-2.
  22. This point is made well by Bender, "Eagle and the Bear": 124.
  23. Although the Soviets had demonstrated some attentiveness to the issue of avoiding confrontation in Angola (this presumably explains in part their reliance on Cuba as principal military partner), they do not appear to have appreciated the scope of political linkage between Third World competition and East-West detente. See Chapter 2.
  24. Figures in Tables 1 and 2 are from the Angolan Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry, as cited in M.R. Bhagavan, "Establishing the Preconditions for Socialism: The Case of Angola," in Barry Munslow, ed., *Africa: Problems in the Transition to Socialism* (London: Zed, 1986), 202, 207-8. There are obviously problems of reliability in these statistics. And one assumes that the focus on state outlets causes an underestimation of total output, particularly in agriculture. But the decay is unmistakable.
  25. *Communist Aid Activities in Noncommunist Less Developed Countries, 1974 and 1954-79*, ER80-10318U (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1980), 39. David Albright notes that Soviet aid to the countries of Southern Africa as a whole was around \$20 million from 1976-79, in "The Communist States and Southern Africa," in Carter and O'Meara, eds., *International Politics in Southern Africa*, 20.
  26. Banco Nacional de Angola, as cited in Bhagavan, "Preconditions for Socialism": 210.
  27. This figure on Portuguese emigration seems rather low. Other sources (e.g., Bhagavan, "Preconditions for Socialism," 142) place it in the realm of 250,000-300,000. Not all of these were skilled workers. But it seems reasonable to conclude that, largely owing to the colonial administration's deliberate neglect of black education, the emigrants' degree of adaptation to the modern economy was considerably greater than the norm for indigenous Angolans.
  28. In 1981, out of a total of \$1,271 million in export revenue, \$991 million came from petroleum produced in cooperation with Western oil companies and \$108 million

came from diamonds handled by affiliates of the South African Anglo-American Corporation. With the eclipse of diamond production resulting from UNITA raids around Luso in 1983-85, oil became even more dominant as a source of export revenue.

29. On the fishing issue, see John Marcum, "Angola: a Quarter Century of War," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 2 (Washington, DC: CSIS, 1982): 2.
30. On UNITA's establishment in Jamba, see William Minter, "Behind the UNITA Curtain," *Africa Report* (May-June 1990): 47.
31. On the involvement of South African support personnel, see Minter, "UNITA Curtain": 46-47.
32. The raid on Kassinga and the damage inflicted on iron ore extraction facilities there suggests that containing SWAPO was not the only factor motivating South African use of force.
33. *Izvestiia*, 26 June 1981. See also Leonid Brezhnev's message to Eduardo Dos Santos in *Pravda*, 26 June 1981.
34. For example, the summary of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Angola meeting of September 2, 1981, Moscow TASS in English (2 September 1981): *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (3 September 1981): J/1.
35. Moscow TASS in English (24 January 1982): *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (25 January 1982): J/1.
36. V. Raznitsyn, "Druzhba i Sotrudnichestvo," *Sel'skaya Zhizn'*, 7 October 1981. Note who is standing guard.
37. Prior to 1985, Soviet arms transfers tended to be for cash or on the basis of nonconcessionary credits. See Marcum, "Quarter Century of War": 4. Slowness of Angolan repayment was apparently an irritant of sorts once the Angolans began to rely to a greater extent on credits.
38. Data taken from *The Military Balance* (London: IISS, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991), and from *Global Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers* (Washington, DC: ACDA, 1988). Reliable annual figures on Angolan defense expenditures are not available, given the lack of clarity on what is and is not included in the defense budget, and the artificiality of the exchange rate. Given the lag between decision and delivery, 1986 was the first year that the Gorbachev leadership affected arms transfer values to any significant degree.

39. It was in 1981 that Mozambique's application for membership in the CMEA was denied, in an explicit indication of the USSR's unwillingness to underwrite the economic development of states of socialist orientation in Southern Africa.
40. See *Africa Confidential* 21, no. 4 (13 February 1980).
41. And this despite explicit rejection of the concept by Lucio Lara earlier in the year -- viz. "V Druzhestvennoi Obstanovke," *Pravda*, 21 January 1982. Lara's speech is also notable for its expression of gratitude to Cuba and not to the USSR for assistance in dealing with the then current South African threat.
42. See TASS (5 February 1982) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (8 February 1982): J/1-2.
43. *Africa Confidential* 22, no. 13 (23 June 1982) notes that in meetings with Vernon Walters in June, the Angolans provided assurances that once agreement on Resolution 435 was attained, they would begin to send the Cubans home.
44. *Pravda*, 7 February 1982.
45. This can be inferred from Sergei Kulik's comment on the joint statement carried by TASS, Moscow World Service in English (6 February 1982) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (9 February 1982): J/1.
46. For example, the meetings between Angola and South Africa in Cape Verde in December 1982 and February 1983. See *Africa Confidential* 24, no. 11 (25 May 1983): 3.
47. See "Rech' General'nogo Sekretarya Ts. K. KPSS Tov. Yu. V. Andropova," *Kommunist*, no. 9 (1983).
48. Xan Smiley, "Inside Angola," *The New York Review of Books* (17 February 1983).
49. On this point, see *Africa Confidential* 23, no. 17 (1982): 7.
50. Presumably, military assistance was a major topic of discussion during the Dos Santos visit to Moscow in May of 1983, given the prominence of Soviet military participation in the talks. Marshal Ogarkov and General Zotov, the chief of a "defense ministry directorate," attended meetings in the Kremlin on May 17. See *Pravda*, 18 May 1983, 4.
51. *Pravda*, 18 May 1983.
52. In conversation with me at a meeting in Cairo in May 1985, a Soviet Africanist compared the Nkomati Agreement with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. In the case of the

Nkomati Accord, the refusal of the USSR to provide Mozambique with requested increases in military assistance was a direct cause of Mozambican willingness to settle with South Africa.

53. See, for example, the kidnapping of 77 foreign technicians from a diamond mine in northeastern Angola in 1984, as reported in *Africa Confidential* 25, no. 5 (29 February 1984): 5.
54. *New Times*, no. 51 (1984).
55. On the South African rationale, see John Marcum, "Angola," *Survival* 30, no.1: 7. The South African action was apparently a surprise to the Soviets, who had assured the Angolans that a SADF response would not be forthcoming. See *Africa Confidential* 27, no.4 (12 February 1986): 5. The abortive South African commando attack on Angolan oil installations in Cabinda in May of 1985 suggested that the Republic of South Africa's (RSA) commitment to the terms of the agreement was weak in any case.
56. See *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (5 August 1985): J/4.
57. Moscow Radio in English to Africa (3 August 1985) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (5 August 1985): J/4.
58. See Table 3 and *The Military Balance, 1985-86* (London: IISS, 1986), 91. A recent Soviet source puts the total number of short and long range anti-aircraft missile complexes at 30, accompanied by some 60 fighters. See Vladislav Janelis, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 6 June 1990.
59. *The Southern Africa Record* (12 June 1986): 8.
60. On this point, see Mikhail Gorbachev's report to the 27th Party Congress, as reported in *Pravda*, 26 February 1986.
61. Hence, in a speech at the Second Congress of the MPLA in 1985, Geidar Aliev noted that "for the USSR and for all socialist countries, the maintenance of peace is the major vital necessity." He went on to a resolute condemnation of the actions of the "racists and their agents" and assured the Angolans of unfailing all-round support. See *Izvestiia*, 4 December 1985.
62. *The Southern Africa Report* (12 September 1986) reported differences of opinion between the Cubans and Soviets over the 1987 offensive to be discussed below. The Cubans apparently resisted strongly, with what turned out to be good reason, the ill-fated FAPLA offensive of July-October 1987.

63. Indeed, the Angolans began to explore tentatively the resumption of participation in US-mediated talks on Namibia at the end of 1985, when Alexandre Rodriguez (Kito) met with Chester Crocker in Lusaka. The shuffle was only partly ideological, however. One can assume that there was some racial basis to it as well, given that several of those demoted were mestizos. Nor was foreign policy necessarily the most significant substantive component. The ministerial changes laid the groundwork for more pragmatic and decentralized management of the economy.
64. He has since taken the Foreign Affairs portfolio.
65. See David Albright, *Soviet Policy toward Africa Revisited*, Significant Issues Series, no. 6 (Washington, DC: CSIS, 1987), 29-50.
66. See V Dashichev, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 18 May 1988.
67. See the text of Shevardnadze's address at a conference in the Foreign Ministry in July 1988, as printed in *Vestnik Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del SSSR*, no. 15 (1988): 27-46. This was not unanimously accepted as demonstrated by Ligachev's dissent carried on *Vremya* (5 August 1988) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (8 August 1988): 41. Mikhail Gorbachev, however, supported his Foreign Minister's call for freeing international relations from ideology in his speech to the United Nations in December 1988. See the English reprint in *Soviet Life*, no. 2 (1989).
68. See Gorbachev, "Address to the 27th Party Congress," and Vladimir Tikhomirov, "The USSR and South Africa," *Africa Report* (November-December 1989): 58.
69. G. Mirskii, "K voprosu o vybore puti i orientatsii razvivayushchikhsya stran," *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenia*, no. 5 (1987): 71. Gerald Bender indicates the relevance of such analysis in the Angolan case as follows:
- In fact, none of the three movements (the MPLA, UNITA, and the FAPLA) could be legitimately or intelligently defined by the ideology of their outside patrons. Instead, each was more an expression of internal Angolan differences -- for example, ethnolinguistic, regional, racial, and other domestic factors.
- Bender, "Eagle and the Bear": 125.
70. By 1986, Angola's external debt was around \$2.75 billion, of which about 50% was owed to the USSR. The vast bulk of the latter was for arms. *Africa Confidential* 27, no. 6 (12 March 1986): 6. A Soviet scholar recently estimated Angolan indebtedness to the USSR to be 1.831 billion roubles, or (as he put it), \$3.1 billion at the official rate of exchange. Leonid Fituni, "A Soviet Analyst's View of Angola's Relevance in the 1990s," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 116 (27 January 1990): 2.

71. This is not to say that the process of political and economic reform in Angola was externally determined. On this point, see the speech of Eduardo Dos Santos, as reported in "Angola: Learning the Lessons of the Events in Eastern Europe," *Asia and Africa Today*, no. 4 (1990): 8.
72. See Gillian Gunn, "A Guide to the Intricacies of the Angola-Namibia Negotiations," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 90 (8 September 1988): 3. There were earlier hints that some Soviet circles had also come to question the predominantly conventional Angolan strategy. An *Izvestiia* round table in 1986 noted the difficulties faced by FAPLA in the following way:
- [After a raid], the UNITA troops quickly leave the battlefield and slink off into the bush. The People's Armed Forces fighters, with their heavy weapons and equipment, are often physically incapable of pursuing the enemy into the bush and swamp.
- Izvestiia* (1 February 1986): 5. Fituni ("A Soviet Analyst's View," 2) noted in this context that Soviet military assistance created an "impressive but rather unwieldy force," an "African version of the Red Army."
73. See, for example the joint Soviet-Angolan communiqué, in *Pravda* (11 May 1986).
74. Compare Dos Santos' Moscow speech in *Pravda*, 8 May 1986, with the Angolan news agency (ANGOP) statement of July 13, 1987, the latter reprinted in *FBIS -- Africa* (14 July 1987): D/1.
75. See ANGOP (24 July 1987) in *FBIS -- Africa* (27 July 1987): D/1.
76. *Cape Times*, 25 July 1987.
77. This sop to Cuban prestige may have been designed to secure Cuban cooperation in the pursuit of a political settlement.
78. Dos Santos estimated at this time that the war had cost Angola about \$12 billion. Luanda Domestic Service in Portuguese, in *FBIS -- Africa* (19 August 1987): D/1.
79. In the same speech, he noted the "inevitability" of Western participation in national reconstruction and announced Angola's intention to apply for IMF membership. *FBIS -- Africa* (19 August 1987): D/2.
80. For example, Gunn, "Angola-Namibia Negotiations," 4.
81. The Angolans claimed 26 white South African casualties and an Angolan loss of 8.



82. An account of the Calueque exchange is contained in *Southern Africa Record*, no. 26 (1 July 1988): 1-3.
83. As reported in *Southern Africa Record* 6, no. 5 (5 February 1988): 1.
84. For example, Castro's 1986 statement to the effect that the Cubans conceivably would not leave Angola until apartheid had been destroyed, as noted in Gillian Gunn, "The Nonaligned Summit: Behind the Rhetoric," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 63 (25 October 1986). This was consistent with Angolan official rhetoric of the time in the context of the renewal of US support to UNITA. Private Angolan statements were less extreme.
85. On this point, see the pointed exchange in *New Times* between Vladislav Chirkov and Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez. Chirkov noted Cuba's economic difficulties, the unprofitability of its enterprises, the crisis in Cuban agriculture, and Cuba's heavy defense expenditure, and went on to remind his readers of the heavy price subsidy on imports of Cuban goods by the socialist community. Rodriguez countered by accusing the Soviet commentator of "resort[ing] to the methods of American Cubanologists who used self-critical remarks from the Cuban leadership to deny even what was positive in Cuba." As reported by Tanjug (17 October 1987) in *Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB)/SU8718/A110* (6 November 1987).
86. These factors are well discussed in Gunn, "Angola-Namibia Negotiations," 4-5.
87. Private conversations.
88. For example, V. Tyurkin, *Pravda*, 9 January 1988.
89. *Southern Africa Record* 4, no. 31 (5 August 1988) and no. 32 (12 August 1988): 1-3.
90. *The Manchester Guardian*, 25 March 1988, and *The Los Angeles Times*, 12 August 1988. In the August report, Deputy Minister Adamishin was reported to have said: a) that a regional settlement could not be successful without an internal one; b) that the latter required compromises with UNITA; and c) that this meant dealing with Savimbi. This brought a quick negative reaction from Angola, as well as a denial of the statement by TASS. The fact that the statement was widely reported suggests that it was indeed made. The official denial, however, indicates a Soviet unwillingness to break openly with the MPLA on key issues. It seems reasonable to interpret it as a not very subtle sign of Soviet impatience with Angolan foot-dragging.
91. There appears to have been some misunderstanding on this point between Angola and the United States. The Angolans claim that the United States initially agreed to stop its assistance to UNITA, and then changed its mind. See the interview with Foreign Minister Pedro de Castro Van Dunem, in *Africa Report* (March-April 1989): 24.

92. See the commentaries of V. Korotov, *Pravda*, 12 April 1989; A. Nikanurov, *Izvestiia*, 16 April 1989; and A. Adamishin's interview on Moscow Radio in Russian (11 April 1989) in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (12 April 1989): 30.
93. In conversation with me in March 1990, a Soviet specialist on Angolan affairs noted that as delivery contracts were fulfilled, volumes of transfers were diminishing, and that when the USSR and Angola renegotiated military assistance agreements, levels of transfers would be much lower.
94. Janelis, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 6 June 1990.
95. Perhaps the most credible hypothesis is that proffered by an anonymous Western diplomat in Luanda to the effect that Mobutu "'played a confidence trick by telling different stories to different sides' in an effort to secure a quick diplomatic success ahead of a crucial trip to Washington." *Ibid.*, 40.
96. For a representative MPLA view of Savimbi, see Van Dunem interview, *Africa Report* (March-April 1989): 25.
97. See Johannesburg SAPA (20 March 1990) in *FBIS -- Africa*, no. 55 (1990): 18; Radio Luanda (20 March 1990) in *FBIS -- Africa* (1990): 20. See also Coleen Lowe Morna, "Ready for Peace?" *Africa Report* (July-August 1990). Lowe Morna notes that during his visit to Luanda, Shevardnadze made it clear that the USSR was "not keen to go on sponsoring [Luanda's] war efforts" (p. 41).
98. See *The New York Times*, 13 December 1990. For Soviet reportage of the meeting see Moscow TASS in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (14 December 1990): 2.
99. On this point, see Sergei Shatalov, "Soviet Assistance to Africa: The New Realities," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 112 (May 1990): 3.
100. Eduard Shevardnadze, as cited in *FBIS -- Soviet Union* (14 December 1990): 2.
101. For a fuller discussion of the domestic political impediments to learning, see S. Neil MacFarlane, "The Changing Role of the USSR in International Security," in David Dewitt, ed., *Emerging Trends in Global Security* (London: Routledge, forthcoming).