

July 20, 1978

**Soviet Ambassador of Angola V.P. Loginov,
Memorandum of Conversation with Official from the
Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola**

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Summary:

Memorandum of Conversation with candidate-member of the Politburo Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT for international issues P. Luvualu, discussing the situation in Zaire and the continued Soviet support for Angola.

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V.P. Loginov

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RECORD OF CONVERSATION

with candidate-member of the Politburo Secretary of the CC of the MPLA-PT for international issues

P. LUVUALU

27 June 1978

[I] visited candidate-member of the Politburo, Secretary of the CC of the MPLA-PT [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola--Partido Trabajo] for international issues, P. Luvualu at his invitation.

P. Luvualu informed me that at the current time the leadership of the People's Republic of Angola has sent several delegations to various African countries in order to explain the Angolan position with regard to Zaire and to gather information on the real nature of the events in the Zairian province of Shaba. The delegations should once again underscore that neither Angola, nor the Soviet Union, nor Cuba bear any relation to the events in the province of Shaba, and that these events are an internal Zairian problem.

The Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT declared that there are objective factors which facilitate the continual occurrence of conflicts and tension in this region. The colonizers, when they drew the borders between states, did not take into account the ethnic make-up of the population. As a result, the significant nationality of the Lunda was broken up and in the current time lives in three countries -- Zaire, Angola and Zambia. Moreover, at the current time there are over 250,000 Zairian refugees in Angola, who are mainly of the Lunda nationality and among them from 20,000 to 30,000 are former soldiers, the so-called Katanga gendarmes. After the war of independence, the central authorities in Zaire began to persecute members of the Lunda nationality who lived in the province of Shaba. Unlawful arrests took place as well as the execution of Zairian soldiers of the Lunda nationality.

It is necessary to take into account the fact that the province of Shaba is the richest of all Zairian provinces and provides a significant part of the hard-currency goods which enter the country, and that some of the largest foreign monopolies have invested capital in the exploitation of the natural resources of the province.

The catastrophic condition of the Zairian economy, the dizzying rise of prices, the corruption which has enveloped the whole machinery of state, including the army, the unbearably serious condition of the population, particularly of national minorities and the greater part of the military, aggravates the conflict between the Kinshasa government and the Lunda nationality, and lead to the revolts which occur from time to time among the soldiers of Lunda nationality in the Zairian army. During moments of acute conflict the Lunda refugees in Angola seek to assist their fellow-tribesmen in the province of Shaba. Moreover, all of the refugees in Angola, it goes without saying, would like to return to their homeland in Zaire. It is practically impossible to control the movement of groups of Lunda nationality from Angola into Zaire and back, since the border between Angola and Zaire stretches out for approximately two thousand kilometers.

P. Luvualu underscored that Mobutu, in every instance when an internal conflict arises, strives by using false pretexts, to internationalize it. The Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT [referred to] the interference of Western powers--the members of NATO in the previous conflict in the province of Shaba and their proposal to create an inter-African armed force which would be used not only to resolve the current tasks of putting down the revolt of the Lunda nationality, [but also for] the preservation of the Mobutu regime, and the possibility for foreign monopolies to continue to exploit the resources of the province of Shaba.

The fact, declared P. Luvualu, that the Republic of South Africa has expressed a desire to take part in the inter-African forces confirms our evaluation of the neo-colonial nature of these forces. This evaluation is also confirmed by the fact that China has sent military instructors to Zaire and has offered equipment for arming the inter-African forces.

In the estimation of P. Luvualu, this issue concerns armed forces of international imperialism which are being created by NATO with the aim of supporting reactionary, unpopular regimes in Africa as well as supporting the struggle against progressive African countries and national liberation movements.

The long term goals of the Western countries consist of strengthening the position of NATO in the central part of Africa in order to break through to the Indian Ocean, i.e. for the neo-colonial conquest of Africa.

The Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT declared that the evaluation by the Angolan leadership of the events in Zaire is confirmed likewise by the resolution of the Western countries to offer Kinshasa economic assistance. The Western countries, as is well known, as a condition for granting such assistance demanded, first, a reform of the management of the Zairian economy and finances according to which representatives of the USA, France, Belgium, and the Federal Republic of Germany would have full control over the economy, finances, and the actions of the administrative apparatus from top to bottom. Secondly, they put forward a demand for the reconciliation of the central Kinshasa authorities with the Lunda nationality in order that foreign monopolies might without resistance exploit the wealth of the province of Shaba. And, finally, the Western countries persist in seeking the reconciliation of Zaire with Angola in order to renew the transport of natural resources from the province of Shaba along the Benguela railroad.

P. Luvualu remarked in this connection that the president of the People's Republic of Angola, A. Neto, in his declaration of July 9, announced that the Zairian refugees will be led from the Zairian borders into the interior of Angola, that Angola will disarm the detachments of the FNLC [Front for the National Liberation of the Congo] which retreat from the province of Shaba into Angola, and that the Angolan government proposes that Zaire, in turn, draw off the UNITA, FNLA, and FLEC bases away from the Angolan border. The President of the People's Republic of Angola in this announcement also underscored that the refugees may live in any country according to their choice. This position, said P. Luvualu, is in complete accordance with the charter of the Organization of African Unity and international law.

Then the Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT raised the problem of Namibia. He informed us that, in appraising the aggression of the Republic of South Africa toward Angola at Cassinga, immediately following the important victory of SWAPO [Southwest African People's Organization] in the UN, the Angolan leadership came to the conclusion that the aggressive actions of the Republic of South Africa were made in pursuit of the following goals: to weaken SWAPO and force it to accept the plan of the 5 Western powers for Namibia; to gain time, in order to create in Namibia a puppet political force which would be able to counter SWAPO; to scare the People's Republic of Angola and weaken Angolan support for SWAPO.

P. Luvualu remarked that events had fully confirmed the correctness of this appraisal of the Angolan leadership. For example, in the present time in Namibia, the Republic of South Africa has created the so-called democratic party with the help of the renegade [Andrea] Chipanga and the so-called National Front of Namibia. Vorster feverishly attempts to prepare elections, which are falsified from the very beginning, and to achieve an internal settlement on the model of the internal settlement of Rhodesia with the aid of puppets like Chipanga.

The Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT declared that the People's Republic of Angola will continue to support SWAPO. The Angolan leadership, he said, considers that for the peaceful resolution of the Namibian problem the Republic of South Africa should: officially define a deadline for the transfer of Walvis Bay to the authorities of Namibia, after declaring the independence of that country; for a period of transition draw off its troops, which are now concentrated on the border with Angola, to bases in the South of Namibia; immediately liberate all political prisoners in Namibia. P. Luvualu likewise remarked that Angola concurs with the proposed role of the UN in the transitional period in Namibia.

In conclusion P. Luvualu underscored that the maneuvers of Western countries around Angola will not succeed in forcing the MPLA-PT to turn from the path it has chosen. We, he declared, have made a firm and final choice of friends. This is the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other socialist countries. With the assistance and support of socialist states, and first and foremost of the Soviet Union and Cuba, Angola will follow its chosen path.

[I] thanked the Secretary of the CC MPLA-PT for this information. From my side I handed him the text of the Declaration of the Soviet Government on Africa (in Portuguese). I underscored that this is an important political action in defense of the independence of African governments, in the solidarity of the USSR in the struggle of the peoples of the continent against the imperialist interference in their affairs. I noted that the appraisal contained in it of the situation in Africa coincides with the position of the People's Republic of Angola. Then I gave him a translation into Portuguese of the Pravda article regarding the external policies of the USA.

I handed [him] a film on the first congress of the MPLA-PT and the sojourn in the People's Republic of Angola of the Soviet party delegation headed by Comrade A.P. Kirilenko.

P. Luvualu expressed his gratitude to the Soviet government for its unflagging support of progressive forces in Africa. He said that he would immediately bring the text of the Declaration to the attention of the leadership of the People's Republic of Angola. He likewise expressed his gratitude for the gift of the CC CPSU.

In the course of our exchange of opinions on international problems P. Luvualu asked that I give information about the situation in South Yemen after the unsuccessful government coup.

Embassy advisor S. S. Romanov was present during this discussion.

USSR AMBASSADOR TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA
/s/ V. LOGINOV

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 75, d. 1148, ll. 71-75; translated by Sally Kux; copy on file at National Security Archive.]