

April 2, 1989

**SWAPO Department of Information and Publicity,
Statement on Cease-fire Violations in Namibia,
Luanda**

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Summary:

Statement by Angolan authorities on military clashes between South African and SWAPO troops. Argues that South African claims of SWAPO instigation are false and misleading, and that the engagements were initiated by the South African military. Further, states that South Africans have been pursuing an anti-SWAPO political and military campaign, fighting and harassing SWAPO and SWAPO supporters.

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The allegations by the South Africa Foreign Minister in Windhoek yesterday that SWAPO has carried out military raid on South African troops in Namibia is misleading and false.

The information that SWAPO has is that the South African military authorities have lately authorized two of their anti-SWAPO units, namely Battalions 101 and 202 to conduct a general hunt of PLAN soldiers who had been inside Namibia avoiding armed contacts with the South African forces since September last year. The apparent reason for this was to try to eliminate all armed SWAPO cadres inside Namibia before the cease-fire went into effect on 1 April. After having exhausted all options to evade the pursuing army, PLAN combatants decided to stand and fight. They thus clashed with South African troops at Okahenga in northern Namibia, and from then on the situation developed from bad to worse as more units joined the fighting. More PLAN men took positions in echelon to fight in support of their comrades facing a premeditated campaign of annihilation.

However, SWAPO armed cadres have been under strict instructions not to initiate any act of military hostility in violation of the cease-fire agreement which came into effect yesterday. To this end, the President of SWAPO visited Namibia/ Angolan frontier areas on 30 and 31 March to issue cease-fire directives to PLAN members in an effort to ensure that the terms of the cease-fire agreement were respected to the letter and spirit. It remains the earnest desire of SWAPO to scrupulously observe the terms of the cease-fire agreement. To avoid further clashes, SWAPO considers it imperative that UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) moves swiftly to destabilize and confine to base the former warring troops. The leadership of SWAPO is ready to play its part in ensuring that further clashes are avoided by moving swiftly all PLAN cadres on both side of the Namibian/Angolan border under UNTAG confinement. To this end, SWAPO extended an urgent invitation to UNTAG that a meeting should be held between the UNTAG Force commander or his representative to meet with PLAN Senior commanders to work out arrangements for troops demobilization and confinement to bases. This was on 22 March. It is to be regretted that such a meeting has not yet taken place. Our delegation of PLAN commanders is in Luanda waiting for the planned meeting with UNTAG military officers.

UNTAG also need to deploy the necessary force to carry out the demobilization and confinement of the opposing forces. The skeleton of 873 troops now on the ground is far inadequate. As a consequence of this inadequacy, the Special Representative of UN Secretary General in Namibia has authorized South African troops to attack and eliminate PLAN cadres in their motherland.

The need to move with maximum speed cannot be over emphasized, because the cease-fire agreement is being violated in many other forms by the vengeful South African troops and their local conscripts. For instance, on the ceasefire day, South African helicopter gunships fired shots at a group of SWAPO supporters at Orunghulo in northern Namibia, killing 8 of them and wounding several others. The crime for which these compatriots were killed and others maimed is that they wore SWAPO T-shirts. Indeed, people are being killed and beaten up every day in northern Namibia for daring to put on SWAPO T-shirts. Houses of SWAPO supporters are daily being burnt down by members of Battalion 101 and 202.

On 31 March, the city of Windhoek was turned into a huge military barrack as the South African military authorities in the territory brought thousands of members of these notoriously anti-SWAPO Battalions to beat up and shoot at SWAPO members who had gathered in the capital to welcome the UN Secretary General's Special Representative. Because it was quite obvious that there was going to be bloodshed, the SWAPO leadership in the country decided to call off the planned welcome march to the airport.

For the last 5 months, the South African troops in Namibia have been waging an unmitigated anti-SWAPO political and intimidation campaign to harass and humiliate our supporters.

This is the background against which the present situation must be seen.